



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**“UNPACKING AND REARRANGING THE BOXES”:  
THE SEARCH FOR A NEW INSTITUTIONAL  
MATRIX OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF THE  
MILITARY IN BOTSWANA**

by

Laki Steven Thaga

March 2004

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Letitia Lawson  
Thomas C. Bruneau

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NEW INSTITUTIONAL MATRIX OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF THE  
MILITARY IN BOTSWANA**

Laki S. Thaga  
Captain, Botswana Defense Force  
B.A., University of Botswana, 1997

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March 2004**

Author: Laki Steven Thaga

Approved by: Letitia Lawson  
Thesis Advisor

Thomas C. Bruneau  
Second Reader

James Wirtz  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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## **ABSTRACT**

Botswana has been hailed as a “model of success”, an “African Miracle” and a “rare bird in Africa” because of its economic prosperity record and democratic achievements in a region of sharp contrasts. A well-developed bureaucracy, selfless leadership and a favorable diamond-led economy have been identified as the main drivers of this success. Its military has earned international acclaim for being professional, well trained and highly disciplined. Organized into four chapters, this thesis recognizes these achievements, but draws the reader to an equally important aspect of statecraft, the underdevelopment of a defense bureaucracy, that may undermine the country’s democratic gains and its economic prosperity. Chapter I proposes an institutionalist conceptual framework to the contemporary landscape of civil-military relations. Chapter II locates the evolution of the military within the template of statecraft, highlighting professionalization as a strategy of military development in the absence of a coherent defense bureaucracy and weak institutions of democratic oversight. The chapter underlines potential dangers of this institutional matrix to civil-military relations and governance. Chapter III captures the evolution of the state amidst elite cohesion and decontraction, demonstrating how these contrasts affect governance in general and civil-military relations in particular. Finally, Chapter IV advances a new institutional matrix for democratic control of the military.

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### Disclaimer

The views expressed in this thesis are entirely those of the author, and do not reflect the official position of the Botswana Defense Force (BDF) or that of the Botswana government. The thesis adds to the continuing scholarly debates on civil-military relations in Africa in general, and in Botswana in particular.

### Dedication

The thesis is solidly dedicated to my great-grandmother, Mmatlhako-a-Molefhe-a-Thaga, for making me be. Her wisdom guides me to this day.

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. BACKGROUND**

The post-Cold War era brings with it a renaissance in the study of civil-military relations. In recent years civil-military relations across the globe has entered into a turbulent era, fundamentally challenging the various models and what have been traditional patterns of the civil-military interface. The subject of civil-military relations continues to reassert itself in public policy and scholarly debates alike. Similarly, the search for democracy has also added momentum to the new debates in this area. Young democracies like Botswana equally face this challenge. The challenge is important particularly given the performance record Botswana has set since independence. At 8.5%, Botswana's annual growth rate (mainly driven by diamonds) was the highest in the world, by far, between 1965 and 1989.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Botswana is the only country on continental Africa to have sustained a democratic regime since independence.<sup>2</sup>

Given these performance rates, Botswana, like a glittering pebble on sand, naturally lures an abundance of attention for analysts and observers alike. To use the "honey and vinegar"<sup>3</sup> metaphor, Botswana's success story is like honey. Yet, one would argue, the "container" has both. It is particularly the "vinegar" that is worrisome because it has the potential to undo the gains of the post-colonial state. In this sense, the focus of this work is on the country's civil-military relations as an aspect of statecraft that potentially undercuts the success-story portrait of Botswana. Reshaping the civil-military interface is important, if not essential, to the consolidation of Botswana's democracy.

## **B. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this thesis is to assess Botswana's institutional matrix of democratic control of the military. This study proceeds from the premise laid by N'Diaye.<sup>4</sup> In his comparative case on Botswana, he outlines professionalization,

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, *World Development Report* 1991, pp.204-205.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank, *World Development Report* 2000/2001, p.294-295.

<sup>3</sup> For the honey and vinegar metaphor see Richard N. Haass and Meghan L. O'Sullivan (eds), *Honey and Vinegar: Incentives, Sanctions, and Foreign Policy* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institute, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Boubakar N'Diaye, *The Challenge of Institutionalizing Civilian Control: Botswana, Ivory Coast and Kenya in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2001).

government legitimacy, and budgetary largesse as key instruments of the state in developing the military, thus reducing coup vulnerabilities. His contribution is invaluable to the study of democratic civil-military relations in Botswana. However, N'Diaye's approach lacks the institutional dimension that would otherwise unravel the interaction of institutions and personalities (elites) beyond the generic laws of the country. The focus on professionalization as an instrument of control is problematic, as shall be shown later. N'Diaye's analysis captures phenomena in Botswana's civil-military relations without due attention to the institutional matrix of the day. Thus, the study leaves a void of analysis as to who does what and the consequences therein. It is this niche that will be focused on in order to fill the void.

The thesis departs on the fundamental premise that Botswana faces serious institutional challenges of democratic control of the military. It outlines the current institutional framework of democratic control of the military, and identifies its inherent shortfalls, underlining their impact on civil military-relations and democratic governance. This thesis argues that the stability of the post-colonial state in Botswana and the relatively healthy civil-military relations are a false start. Following Molomo, it is argued that the country's political stability is predicated on an uncertain military disequilibrium, one where the military's autonomy is so high it may undermine state stability.<sup>5</sup> The creation of a defense bureaucracy, and the re-engineering of other institutions of democratic control and oversight would help undo the military imbalance and broaden state stability. Arguing from institutionalist and organizational theory perspectives, the thesis endeavors to show that Botswana's much-celebrated success is deceiving. Much of the analysis on the country's success has focused on economic variables while missing an important sector of the state, the military and defense.

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<sup>5</sup> Mpho G. Molomo, "Civil-Military Relations in Botswana's Developmental State," *African Studies Quarterly: The Online Journal for African Studies*. <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v5/v5i2a3.htm> (accessed on 3/8/2003), p.2.

### **C. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This thesis addresses Botswana's institutional framework of democratic control. It seeks to show the problems associated with having executive control of the military centralized in the office of the president. The president, as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, has immense power over the military, including determining senior officers' promotions. The role of parliament is conspicuously absent in this key democratic function. The role of parliament on defense and other national security matters is weak. The parliamentary oversight committee on foreign affairs, trade and security has too broad a mandate to effectively address issues of defense. The Defense Council, responsible for the superintendence and control of the military, is appointed by the president without the involvement of parliament. The council has no obligation to report to parliament. Currently Botswana does not have a defense bureaucracy. Consequently, defense is clubbed together with the police and civil service, an arrangement that does not bode well with efficiency and effectiveness in the utilization of national resources. These are major flaws in the country's institutions of democratic control. The study puts these in perspective, and argues that they have the potential to undermine democratic civil-military relations and governance. In sum, the study underlines the need for defense reform as a continuing process of statecraft and good governance. The thesis therefore adds to the continuing debate on democratic civil-military relations and defense reform in the country.

### **D. RESEARCH QUESTION**

The research question is: What challenges does Botswana's current institutional framework of democratic control pose to civil-military relations and governance?

### **E. JUSTIFICATION AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

In this thesis civil-military relations is taken as the dependent variable (DV). Independent variables (IV's) are institutions and elite cohesion. The institutional framework of democratic control is understood here to mean state institutions responsible for formulating and conducting defense and national security policy. The thesis draws on theories of civil-military relations, and institutional and/or organizational theories for reference. Based on the literature, the thesis studies the institutional framework, and

power relations between the executive, parliament, the military and civil society, and how their interactions affect civil-military relations. The approaches used are described below.

## **F. DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS**

### **1. The New Institutionalism**

The new institutionalism developed in response to the group theories of politics and structural-functionalism prominent in the political science literature of the 1960's and 1970's.<sup>6</sup> This school of thought has three different analytical approaches. However, for the purposes of this work only two are used. The first, historical institutionalism, perceives the institutional organization of the polity as the principal factor structuring collective behavior and generating distinctive outcomes. It emphasizes the asymmetries of power associated with the development and operation of institutions. The approach also focuses on how existing state capacities and policy legacies impact on future policy choices. Historical institutionalism sees development as periods of continuity punctuated by 'critical junctures' where substantial institutional changes take place, creating in the process, a 'branching point' marking a new path.<sup>7</sup> In net, it must be noted that historical institutionalism does not pretend that institutions are the only causal force in politics.

The second, rational choice institutionalism was mainly inspired by studies of American congressional behavior and how stable majorities for legislation were organized.<sup>8</sup> This approach out-sourced fruitful analytical tools from the 'new economics of organization,' which underline the importance of property rights, rent-seeking and transaction costs to the operation and developments of institutions. Principal-agency theories are also emphasized here as a way of enforcing compliance and regulatory behavior in politics. Institutions sanction behavioral patterns and reduce uncertainties, and are able to endure and transcend historical epochs.

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<sup>6</sup> See Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C.R. Taylor, "Political Science and the New Institutionalism," *Political Studies* (1996), XLIV, and pp. 936-957; See also Sven Steinmo, et al., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Peter A. Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986).

<sup>8</sup> See Mathew D. McCubbins and Terry Sullivan (eds), *Congress, Structure and Policy* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

## **2. Organizational Theory**

Organizational theory derives from the broader body of the scientific management thought of the 1920's that has influenced human organization. This approach is mainly concerned with the anatomy or structure of formal organizations and the rational behavior of its human parts.<sup>9</sup> The theory underlines division of labor and specialization as key attributes of human organization. Bureaucracy generally implies a set of structural arrangements and specific patterns of behavior influenced by such structures. Thus bureaucracy has become a dominant feature of contemporary human organization and transcends all faculties of life, from economic and social life to political and military systems. Max Weber, in his *Economy and Society*, analyses the military as a Stand, or a profession, and as a bureaucratic organization.<sup>10</sup> The contention here is that Botswana currently faces institutional and/or organizational problems of democratic control. The approach therefore sees the civil-military problematique through institutional lenses.

Organizational theory provides the framework of institutional development. Focusing on managerial systems and processes, the approach provides insights on the dynamics of institutions such as bureaucracies. The military is a bureaucratic organization that is highly specialized in every sense of the word. It therefore requires a specialized civilian bureaucracy to manage and oversee it. The organizational theory approach provides a necessary template for understanding the institutional problems of democratic control.

## **3. Democratic Civilian Control**

The concept of civilian control dates as far back as the days of Plato, Juvenal and Machiavelli.<sup>11</sup> In recent history it has been extensively dealt with and popularized by Samuel Huntington, among others. Huntington defines civilian control as that distribution

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<sup>9</sup> Jay M. Shafritz and Phillip H. Whitbeck, *Classics of Organization Theory* (Oak Park, Illinois: Moore Publishing, 1978), p.1. See also William G. Scott, "Organization Theory: An Overview and Appraisal," *Academy of Management Journal* (April 1961), pp.7-26; Michael Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

<sup>10</sup> Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (eds), *Max Weber, Economy and Society* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1978.)

<sup>11</sup> See *The Dialogues of Plato*, translated by Benjamin Jowett (Chicago, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952); Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by W. K. Marriott (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952).

of political power between the military and civilian groups which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes, and behavior among members of the officer corps.<sup>12</sup> In recent political theory parlance this area of study has earned the nuance, “democratic control of the armed forces”(DCAF), emphasizing the importance of a democratic framework as the basis. Democratic control is thus generally understood to mean subordination of the armed forces to democratically elected civilians to superintend a given country’s affairs.<sup>13</sup> Fundamentally, it means that the sole legitimate source for the direction and actions of the military is derived from civilians outside the military and defense establishment. The process is dynamic and susceptible to changing ideas, values, circumstances, issues and personalities, and to the stresses of crises and war.

Democratic control is complex and multifaceted. The new institutionalism emphasizes looking beyond just the generic laws of the country in order to understand the ‘black-box’ of civil-military relations. The challenge, therefore, is to study legal and institutional frameworks, functional relationships between the military, political authority and roles and missions of the armed forces. As tool of governance, democratic control emphasizes pluralism and accountability in the realm of defense.

#### **4. Military Professionalization**

Military professionalization is a product of the nineteenth century and is mainly associated with Western society. The notion of professionalism gained prominence with the emergence of the officer corps as an autonomous professional body, especially during the Napoleonic Wars. As a concept, professionalism has been popularized by, among others, Samuel Huntington.<sup>14</sup> The professionalization model focuses attention on developing a professional ethos in the individual. Professionalism emphasizes developing the individual into voluntary subordination and self-control. Essentially, through training and education, the soldier is expected to develop self-imposed professional standards.

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<sup>12</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> Simon Lunn, “The Democratic Control of the Armed Forces in Principle and Practice,” in *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Vol.1, No.4 December, 2002 (Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes), p.83. See also Douglas L. Bland, “A Unified Theory of Civil-Military Relations,” *Armed Forces & Society* Vol. 26, No.1 (1997), p.10; and “Patterns in Liberal Democratic Civil-Military Relations,” *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 27, No.4 (2001).

<sup>14</sup> Huntington, op cit.

The theoretical predicate of professionalization is the assumption that professional forces are generally amenable to civilian control. Professional forces tend to accept that civilian control and oversight would promote military efficiency and professional interaction between themselves and the political leadership based on technical expertise. Professionalism has thus become both a value and an institution of military development. It has increasingly become topical in the developing countries, with the waves of democratization that have swept the world. Botswana has employed it as a policy of military development. The absence of a defense bureaucracy undermines professionalization as a policy of development.

These concepts provide a comprehensive framework for understanding defense organization and reform in general. They provide a useful analytical tool-kit for understanding issues of democratic control of the military and governance. More importantly, this conceptual framework provides signposts in the chapters, pointing to key landmarks of civil-military relations that one has to look for in navigating such terrain.

## **G. ORGANIZATION**

The first chapter provides the rationale, objectives and justification of the study. It frames the research question and outlines the methodology used. Finally, the chapter identifies the variables, and defines some key terms and concepts used in the study.

Chapter II outlines the current institutional framework of democratic control, noting that it is ad hoc, sketchy, and inefficient. It is noted that centralization of power and the state's preoccupation with professionalism as a major instrument of democratic civilian control of the military overshadowed the development of a defense bureaucracy. Centralization of power in the presidency undermines the fundamental liberal principle of separation of powers, and renders other institutions of democratic control weak and wanting in their watchdog roles. In particular, this chapter highlights the managerial and organizational problems posed by the current arrangement, both for the state and the military.

Chapter III explores the role that political and military elites have played in state development and how they influenced patterns of democratic civil-military relations over

the years. The chapter departs from the predicate that elite cohesion is an important variable in determining the direction of state policy and class organizational relationships. The chapter applies a comparative study of how elite cohesion has impacted the evolution of the state and civil-military relations over the years. First it explores this evolution during the first two decades of independence. Second, it looks at the 1990's and beyond.

Chapter IV proposes a new institutional matrix to the problems outlined in the previous chapters. A defense review is the first step towards defense reform. The creation of a defense bureaucracy is seen here as the basic formula for addressing core institutional problems in the current arrangement. In addition, it is argued that other instruments of oversight such as the Defense Council and the Parliamentary Committee on Trade, Foreign Affairs and Security should be reformed to meet the challenging dynamics of national security and defense. In conclusion, this chapter draws the reader's attention to the resources that defense reform would require. Key among these would be political will from all the stakeholders in the process to give the exercise the momentum, life and meaning it deserves.

## II. BEYOND THE PRISM: THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF DEMOCRATIC CIVILIAN CONTROL

### A. BACKGROUND

Reeling from years of colonial neglect and underdevelopment, Botswana gained independence in 1966 as one of the poorest countries in the world. When the colonial era ended, there was virtually no infrastructure to talk about. In a territory of two hundred and twenty thousand square miles, only twenty-five miles of tarmac road existed.<sup>15</sup> Gross domestic product (GDP) stood at a paltry US \$ 60 million and consisted mainly of beef exports to Britain and South Africa. Added to this, no bureaucracy existed at independence. Botswana inherited a bare-bones bureaucracy staffed almost wholly by expatriates.<sup>16</sup> This was primarily because the colonial state was characterized by administrative neglect and did little to foster local institutions.<sup>17</sup> Following from this neglect, the education system was left equally underdeveloped. The consequence, Molomo further notes, was that Botswana did not possess the requisite skills to take over their public service.

However, much was to change in a fairly short space of time. State institutions expanded rapidly, giving way to a fairly well developed bureaucracy. Beginning with 2,986 employees in 1968, the number in central government expanded to 10,083 by 1979 and 56,416 by 1996.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, Botswana's economy catapulted into one of the fastest growing in the world. The country rose from one of the most impoverished countries in Africa, with a GNP per capita of less than \$80 a year in 1966, to a dynamic

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<sup>15</sup> Mike Sill, "Sustaining a Success Story," *Geographical Magazine* 1993, Vol.42, p.37; also refer to David Anderson, "President Seretse Khama: A Personal View," in Gwendolyn Carter and Phillip Morgan, (eds), *From the Frontline: Speeches of Sir Seretse Khama* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institute, 1980), p.xv.

<sup>16</sup> Amy R. Poteete, "Ideas, Interests, and Institutions: Challenging the Property Rights Paradigm in Botswana," *Governance, A Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, Vol.16, No.4, October 2003, p.539.

<sup>17</sup> Mpho G. Molomo, "The Bureaucracy and Democracy in Botswana" in John Holm and Patrick Molutsi, (eds), *Democracy in Botswana: Proceedings of a Symposium held in Gaborone, 1-5 August 1988* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1989), p.239.

<sup>18</sup> Amy R. Poteete, op cit.

middle income economy with per capita earning of nearly \$1, 800 in 1996.<sup>19</sup> These high levels of growth have been unmatched elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa.

This is indeed the story of a lifetime. In one sense, this success story has been largely attributed to a strong and dedicated leadership, which has been able to harness the country's resources for the greater benefit of the citizens. In another, a well-developed bureaucracy is also credited with the ability of the country's economy to position itself into the 'projectile' it has so far displayed. As a result of its meteoric leap, Botswana earned itself accolades of all sorts. Some have hailed it as a "model for success."<sup>20</sup> Others have dubbed it an "African Miracle"<sup>21</sup>, and a "rare bird in Africa."<sup>22</sup>

Botswana's exceptionality is anchored first and foremost on sound economic management that is also driven by effective policy formulation and implementation. Secondly, it is the primacy of technological rationality, bureaucratic unity and insulation of economic policy making from political and social pressures that have served an institutional basis for effective economic management.<sup>23</sup> According to another observation, this technocratic approach has dominated the country's development planning and has given the bureaucracy considerable influence in defining the country's economic direction.<sup>24</sup> While the country had a small percentage of educated citizens with professional expertise, it relied on the remaining 'layer' of the colonial bureaucracy that was in place to provide a basis for bureaucratization. Government, therefore, went out to educate and train personnel to equip them with requisite skills to man the new posts in the country's bureaucracy. In sum, a dedicated elite, frugal in fiscal policy, was able to develop a strong state bureaucracy and equip it with dedicated civil servants over time.

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<sup>19</sup> Mpho G. Molomo, "Civil-Military Relations in Botswana's Developmental State," *African Studies Quarterly: The Online Journal for African Studies*. <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v5/v5i2a3.htm> (accessed on 3/8/2003), p.3

<sup>20</sup> Louis Picard, *The Politics of Development in Botswana: Model for Success?* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1987).

<sup>21</sup> Abdi Ismael Samatar, *An African Miracle: State, Class and Leadership and Colonial Legacy in Botswana Development* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Zibani Maundeni, et al, "Democratic Governance and Common Security in Southern Africa: The Case of Botswana," SASDEM/IDRC Research Project (Gaborone, Botswana: Center for Strategic Studies, Department of Political and Administrative Studies, University of Botswana, 2003).

<sup>23</sup> A. Leftwich, "Bringing Back Politics In: Towards a Model of the Developmental State," *Journal of Development Studies* Vol.31, 1996, p.143.

<sup>24</sup> Mpho G. Molomo, op cit, p.3.

This leadership was able to harness and manage available resources prudently, thus contributing to a strong developmental state.

By contrast, while bureaucratization was the fundamental focus of state organization, professionalization became the cornerstone of defense and military organization. This chapter focuses on the two models, bureaucratization and professionalization, as a basis of analysis and endeavors to show how the two have influenced civil-military relations in post-colonial Botswana. Over the twenty-seven years of the Botswana Defense Force's existence, there is no unitary defense bureaucracy that primarily manages, oversees and controls the military. Instead, the state has relied on a sketchy and ad hoc arrangement of defense management. In essence, this chapter contends that the post-colonial state has over-expended resources on military professionalism to the detriment of developing a defense bureaucracy.

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

Against this backdrop, it is clear that in the bigger 'laboratory' of Botswana's developmental success, there are other 'institutional crucibles' that have been neglected. Their fission may potentially undermine the country's democratic gains. The benefits of a strong bureaucracy have been unnecessarily overstated and have consequently overshadowed other areas that have been neglected for a long time. The laudatory praises the country has received may potentially lull it to sleep. Perhaps, as Botswana's Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister recently put it, Botswana should not "get too excited about the accolades the country has been receiving from the international community."<sup>25</sup> In some cases, he argues, the compliment is "by default" as the country is not being compared with the best. This chapter identifies the challenges of professionalization as an instrument of military development without the concurrent development of a defense bureaucracy. The chapter contends that the post-colonial state has been preoccupied with military professionalism while neglecting the development of a defense bureaucracy to manage the professionalizing military. This tilted development has resulted in a civilian-military imbalance of power and expertise tantamount to undermining state stability. Because of lack of civilian expertise on military and defense

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<sup>25</sup> See Letshwiti Tutwane, "New Hope For Women in the BDF," *Mmegi*, Vol.20, No.73, 2, December 2003. <http://www.mmegi.bw/2003/December/tuesday2/886551426516.html> (accessed 12/03/2003)

issues, civilian political authority heavily relies on the military to lead military and defense policy. Consequently, the military enjoys immense autonomy, and often finds itself having to play the ‘baker’ and consumer of the defense policy ‘cake’ at the same time. This skewed power symmetry has the potential to corrode and undercut democratic control and oversight of the military. By extension, the imbalance creates managerial and organizational deficiencies in defense. It also affects the capacity of oversight and control mechanisms within the executive and the legislative branches of government.

The military becomes a natural area of interest for three major reasons. First and foremost because of its historically meddlesome disposition in African politics. Second, the military deserves attention because it has been a neglected area of debate and scholarly attention in Botswana. Third, and more importantly, it begs for analysis because it continues to consume a fairly large portion of national resources in the country. Between 1977 and 1980, government spent an average of 4 to 9.7 percent of the national budget on the military. In 1993 military expenditure was 4.9% of GDP.<sup>26</sup> This average figure has continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For purposes of political responsibility and democratic accountability, it is critical to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness with which the “guns”<sup>27</sup> are managed. A defense bureaucracy naturally becomes the template of analysis.

### **C. BUREAUCRATIZATION: THE CONCEPT**

Seen as an organization unto itself, the military deserves a peculiar form of organization. A leading authority in the bureaucratization literature, Max Weber, has written extensively about the timeless importance of bureaucracy as a form of human organization. Weber analyzed the military as a stand, or a profession and as a bureaucratic organization. Modern officialdom, Weber argues, functions in a specific manner with the following core attributes:

- There is the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulations.
- The principles of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super-subordination in which there is supervision

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<sup>26</sup> Dale, op cit, p. 224.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed analysis of the Guns-or-Butter metaphor, see Irving Bernstein, *Guns or Butter: The Presidency of Lyndon Johnson* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.525-542.

of the lower offices by the higher ones. Once established, and having fulfilled its task, an office tends to continue in existence and be held by another incumbent.

- The management of office is based upon written documents ('the files'), which are preserved in their original or draught form. There is, therefore a staff of subaltern officials and scribes of all sorts who along with the respective apparatus and material implements and the files, make up a 'bureau.'
- Office management usually presupposes thorough and expert training.
- The management of the office follows general rules, which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned. Knowledge of these rules represents a special technical learning, which the officials possess.<sup>28</sup>

Most modern organizations, from private organizations to states, conform to this model and have found it useful because of its general efficiency and effectiveness. It has essentially become the generic order of doing business. Weber, however cautions that bureaucracy tends to degenerate into a bad form of organization that becomes a 'steel-hard cage' not easily accessible to the vast majority of the population.<sup>29</sup> Bureaucratization emphasizes structure, organization and specialization. Further a bureaucracy develops norms, values, practices and processes that come to stay with it. As such there is continuity and longevity in the life of a bureaucracy. Bureaucratic institutions therefore have a life of their own. They endure and have a demonstration effect. The rationale for a defense bureaucracy implies that the armed forces are sufficiently different from other social organizations. Given its structure, culture, recruitment and skills requirement, legal status plus the degree of social integration into society, the military is distinct. As Christopher Dandeker puts it:

The military is unique in nature and extent of the demands it places upon its personnel. They are obliged to train to kill and to sacrifice self, to participate in a military community where one works, lives and socializes

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<sup>28</sup> H.H Gerth and C. Wright Mills, (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp.196-198.

<sup>29</sup> D. Held, *Models of Democracy* (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1987), p.152.

with other service personnel and, when necessary, to respond to a 24-hour commitment with the risk of separation from family at short notice.<sup>30</sup>

By contrast, Botswana's defense bureaucracy is sketchy and simple if anything. In fact, it conforms to a "simple structural configuration."<sup>31</sup> The simple structure is characterized by what is not elaborated. Typically, it has little or no technostucture, few support staffers, a loose division of labor, minimal differentiation among its units, and a small managerial hierarchy. As will be shown below, Botswana's defense organization typifies this analogy to a large extent.

#### **D. PROFESSIONALIZATION: THE CONCEPT**

Military professionalism is an instrument of civilian government control of the military. The professionalization model focuses attention on developing a professional ethos in the individual. Professionalism emphasizes developing the individual into voluntary subordination and self-control. Essentially, through training and education, the soldier is expected to develop self-imposed professional standards. The theoretical predicate of professionalization is the assumption that professional forces are generally amenable to civilian control. Professional forces tend to accept that civilian control and oversight would promote military efficiency and professional interaction between themselves and the political leadership based on technical expertise.

However, professionalization has its own shortfalls. First it is to be noted that professionalization is difficult to quantify. Secondly, as Herbert Howe cautions, professionalism usually requires an institutionalized system of stable and widely accepted political values that exist independent of a specific regime.<sup>32</sup> Such institutionalization can only be understood within the broader parameters of a bureaucracy primarily geared at enforcing it. Assessing the professionalization model, Morris Janowitz, has argued that,

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<sup>30</sup> Christopher Dandeker, "Flexible Forces for the Twenty-First Century," Facing Uncertainty Report No.1 (Karstad: Department of Leadership, Swedish National Defense College, 1999), p.85. Also refer to Christopher Dandeker, "The Military in Democratic Societies: New Times and New Patterns of Civil-Military Relations," in *Military and Society in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Europe: A Comparative Analysis* ed. by Jurgen Kuhlmann and Jean Callaghan (Hamburg: Lit, 2000).

<sup>31</sup> Henry Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979), pp.299-347.

<sup>32</sup> Herbert M. Howe, op cit.

professionalism is not sufficient to ensure responsible specialists.<sup>33</sup> The focus on the professionalization approach tends to be on structures of stability and equilibrium, which are difficult to attain in a relationship whose borderlines are fluid and difficult to manage.

The idea of recognizing a sphere of autonomous military professionalism, and of having a professional, politically neutral corps of military officers, rests upon two problematical theoretical foundations.<sup>34</sup> First, because the arguments are predicated on classical organization theories that suggest that politics can be separated from administration. Subordination of the military to political supremacy does not imply total and unquestioning obedience by the military or utter non-involvement in political matters at all. In the real world of civil-military interface, the borderlines often become increasingly blurred. Secondly, the functional premise of professionalism is that peer-group control or professional self-control is enough to guarantee an altruistic orientation for professionals in their daily execution of chores. Equally relevant, equating military professionalism and voluntary subordination, holds fewer insights for professionalism as a reliable and enduring model. History is replete with examples of armed forces that were deemed professional, both by domestic and international standards, but have nevertheless challenged civilian authority, either toppling government or coming close to usurping state power. At the end of the day, it is evident that professionalism as a single state strategy for military development can be detrimental both to military development and state stability.

#### **E. MILITARY GROWTH AND INSTITUTIONAL STAGNATION: THE PARADOX OF NATIONAL DEFENSE**

In order to place the two models in context, let us now focus briefly on the evolution of the military and defense in Botswana. A brief outline of the history of the BDF is provided in order to demonstrate here that professionalization was a purposeful policy instrument of the post-colonial state for developing the military. By design or default, little was done to tie this professionalization with a distinct defense bureaucracy

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<sup>33</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1961), p.343. See also Morris Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977).

<sup>34</sup> Tom Skaug, "Contraction and Detraction: Non-Equilibrium Studies of Civil-Military Relations," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.31, No.2, 1994, p.190.

to compliment inherent weaknesses of the approach. The management of defense has remained centralized in the office of the presidency, with no technostucture, and few if any staffers in the state bureaucracy. Meanwhile, other institutions in the state bureaucracy developed well-organized mini bureaucracies that later took better bureaucratic form and organization. The expenditure pattern alluded to above, goes to show this tilted commitment. The net result has been the over-development of the military, and the underdevelopment of civilian expertise in government.

Defense management and reform fall within the core template of statecraft. These efforts seek to answer the paradoxical question “*Sed quis custodiet ipso custodiet?*”<sup>35</sup> (But who will guard the guardians?). History reminds us that since the birth of nation-states, civilians have grappled with the problem of how to subordinate armies to their will. Whether they presided over colonies, newly independent states, or modern twentieth-century totalitarian, authoritarian, or democratic régimes, political leaders have always had to balance the twin goals of harnessing enough military force to defeat their enemies, and ensure that that force is not turned against themselves.<sup>36</sup>

In the history of human organization and statecraft, the question “who guards the guardians?” has remained a timeless problematique of civilian control. This question of civilian control of the military is a particularly polemical one in Africa where the military has a rich history of perpetual involvement in politics. Several studies have been done on the dynamics of military involvement in the region, leading some to conclude that, “many of Africa’s militaries are unprofessional, lacking both technical expertise for combat and political responsibility to the state.”<sup>37</sup> Due to these attributes, combined with problems of weak political institutions, these militaries, it is argued, have had the incentives to indulge in politics, often leading to a spiral of military take-overs.

The development of the military, and its existence within the framework of civilian supremacy is therefore a major problem of African realpolitik. For young and

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<sup>35</sup> Juvenal quoted in Claude E. Welch, Jr. and Arthur K. Smith, *Military Role and Rule* (North Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1974), p.2.

<sup>36</sup> David Pion-Berlin, ed., *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p.1.

<sup>37</sup> Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p.9.

fairly successful democracies such as Botswana, the *raison d'etre* of democratic control is necessary to ensure that national security and defense issues are subordinated to the national interest. This is particularly so when judged against the success story that the country has been. In net therefore, the greater challenge for democratic governance is the attempt to strike a balance between the two professionalization and bureaucratization without necessarily compromising the efficiency of the military to perform its functions on the one hand, and ensuring that it operates within the framework of democratic control without endangering state stability and legitimacy, on the other. For old and young nation-states alike, this is a time-tested platform of contest.

### **1. The Botswana Defense Force: A Brief History**

Concerned with the phenomenon of military intervention in politics, Botswana deliberately deferred the creation of the military despite the fact that at independence the constitution provided for its existence. During the transition to independence, Prime Minister Seretse Khama rejected as “ridiculous” the opposition’s calls for the creation of an army.<sup>38</sup> Earlier in March of 1966, the Bechuanaland Protectorate Legislative Assembly defeated a motion tabled by opposition member Motlhagodi, calling for “military training as the first step toward the creation of an army.”<sup>39</sup> This institutional tapestry marked a fundamental departure in traditional statecraft in that the state was born without the “war making” capacity. The rest of Africa’s decolonizing states either inherited a military establishment or created one on attaining independence. The *raison d'etre* for such craftsmanship is in order here. As Welch argues, creating an army at independence brought the intractable budgetary, political, ethnic, discipline and other problems associated with colonial armies.<sup>40</sup> Instead, the Police Mobile Unit (PMU), an offshoot of the colonial state, was equipped as a paramilitary force to face the national security challenges of the new state. The PMU therefore played the dual role of internal policing and providing territorial security for the new nation.

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<sup>38</sup> “No Army Wanted,” *The Johannesburg Star* 24 August 1966,p.14.

<sup>39</sup> Refer to Bechuanaland Legislative Assembly Official Report, Hansard No.15, pp.19-25.

<sup>40</sup> Claude E. Welch, Jr. and Arthur K. Smith, *Military Role and Rule*, (North Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1974), pp.308-309.

However, sooner it became clear that the PMU was inadequate as a national security instrument. Meanwhile, the security situation in the region was changing drastically. The liberation war in Southern Rhodesia escalated in the mid-seventies. Rhodesian forces were increasingly crossing into Botswana, raiding villages, kidnapping people, and even killing some. Due to this major shift in the regional security dynamics it became apparent that the creation of an army was inevitable. Consequently, government bowed to this increasing pressure and made the creation of an army a priority. Thus the Botswana Defense Force Bill was tabled before parliament in 1977. It must also be noted here that the creation of the BDF could not have come about without the agitation of political and civil society. In the 1977 debate, leader of the Botswana People's Party (BPP), Mr. Phillip Matante, welcomed government's decision to create an army noting, "I give the Bill my fullest support."<sup>41</sup> Other legislators from both sides of the house, especially those from the north, were equally adamant about the creation of an army. The point to take home is simply that at this point, there was political consensus for such a policy because of the dictates of the situation, a sharp contrast to the 1966 economic and security juxtaposition.

## **2. Professionalization: A Choice Model for Military Development**

The fear of coups reverberated in the parliamentary debates preceding the BDF's creation. Among others, legislators such as Englishman Kgabo cautioned government to guard against "greedy and self-seeking leaders of the military who might undermine Botswana's democracy with a coup."<sup>42</sup> Thus when the military was finally created in 1977, government undertook a deliberate policy to create a professional, well trained and disciplined army. Arguably, the commitment of the state to military professionalism is not in doubt. Resources have been spent immensely in this area. Richard Dale for instance, argues that one of the government's commitments to professionalism was "the meticulous details in the 1977 Botswana Defense Force Act regarding military jurisprudence."<sup>43</sup> He further contends that the Act was an unequivocal signal to the

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<sup>41</sup> Honorable Phillip Matante, quoted in Ernest Chilisa, "MP's Give Blessing to Army Bill," *Daily News*, March 31, 1977, No. 64, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> Ernest Chilisa, *op cit*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> Richard Dale, "The Creation and Use of the Botswana Defense Force," in *The Round Table* Vol. 290 (1984), p. 222.

officer corps and ordinary soldiers alike that the most professional conduct was expected from them.

A further indication of this commitment was the emphasis on training the officer corps. Within a short period of the BDF's creation sixteen (16) officers were sent to the Sandhurst Military Academy to join Ian Khama.<sup>44</sup> In March of 1980, Botswana entered into an agreement which provided American training for the BDF, and also provided for a tour of United States army bases in order for General Merafhe to assess the "various types of training available." This commitment and support has been successfully sustained over the years. In fact, the US has been the largest single contributor to the development of the BDF to date. Government has relentlessly ensured that this commitment is sustained.

Over a decade the BDF grew in size from a paltry 300 men to about 4000. Ever since, the BDF has grown in strength as more and more developments took place. Between 1977 and 1980, Government spent an average of 4 to 9.7 percent of the national budget on the military, part of which went to training and education. Contrasted with the rest of Africa, analysts argue, the military in Botswana has made significant strides into the realm of professionalism. As a result, the Botswana Defense Force (BDF) stands out as an exception of the 'norm' of coups and deleterious intervention in politics in the continent. Observers from across various divides have referred to the BDF as "professional, multiracial, and well trained."<sup>45</sup> This effort of professionalization was therefore purposeful, deliberate and well planned by the political leaders. It is clear that the leadership chose the professionalization option given its utility, particularly in minimizing coup vulnerabilities and therefore stabilizing the state.

Judging by the level of commitment to professionalization, it can be safely argued that the 'coup threat' that was topical in the formative years of post-colonial Botswana has been fairly minimized. Given the cumulative loyalties and political-military elite cohesion, plus appeasement strategies of the state to the military, such a threat has largely

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid*, p.224.

<sup>45</sup> *Jane's Sentinel*. Botswana Country Profile in [http://www. Jane's. Com/public/geopolitical/sentinel/saf/botswana.html](http://www.Jane's.Com/public/geopolitical/sentinel/saf/botswana.html) (accessed 09/24/03). In the interviews conducted by this author respondents also expressed confidence in the BDF's professionalism.

fallen behind. However, given the problems of measuring professionalism, it is never clear as to when the optimum benchmark has or has not been attained. The threshold is simply difficult to establish.

The extent to which this professionalization has enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the case of Botswana remains a moot case. Professionalism becomes a polemical gauge or unit of measure, especially given that there are no established strategic and performance frameworks against which it could be measured. In the first instance, there is no national security strategy that outlines the roles and missions of the various units of national security. Secondly, there is no military and defense policy against which such professionalism could be measured. Thirdly, despite a history of close to three decades of the BDF's existence, there has never been a strategic defense review of the military and defense in Botswana. Consequently, we cannot ascertain with any grain of precision as to what it is we want to achieve with a military the size the BDF; or what our major shortfalls in traversing the slippery road of civil-military relations over the years have been, and how best they could be improved. In the absence of these roadmaps and barometers therefore, it is doubtful as to whether we know where we are going.

The challenge of defense reform, and the creation of a modern bureaucracy to run the military remains the missing link-pin in the country's development and its civil-military interface. The need for a bureaucracy is particularly relevant, *inter alia*, when the military is seen as a pressure group, and an important player in state consolidation. The national defense landscape has changed quite considerably. Threat perceptions have also been altered. There is relative peace and stability in the region. Thus for Botswana, the problem for the state "is the relation of the military expert to the politician."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of Civil Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap, 1964), p.20.

## **F. DEMOCRATIC CONTROL: THE CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL MATRIX AND ITS CHALLENGES**

This section seeks to demonstrate the underdevelopment and weaknesses of institutions of democratic control and oversight. It also endeavors to highlight the problems of the over-involvement of the military in national security policy, often because of their expertise and lack of a challenging or counter-balancing force from the civilian side. It underscores the potential danger that this cumulative power disequilibrium poses for democratic civil-military relations now, and its bigger stakes for democratic governance in the future. In order to signpost this analysis well, I focus primarily on the executive and parliament as instruments of objective control, and civil society. Civil society is considered because it is an important watchdog of democracy and also a key player in democratic control outside the state. Under the executive, the chapter investigates the Presidency, the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration (MPAPA), and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) as key instruments of executive control over the military. Under the same ambit, this chapter also considers the life of the Defense Council and its utility as an ad hoc bureaucracy superintending the BDF.

In order to set the framework of the argument, a basic definition of civilian control is relevant. Huntington defines civilian control as that distribution of political power between the military and civilian groups, which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes, and behavior among members of the officer corps.<sup>47</sup> In recent political theory parlance this area of study has earned the nuance, “democratic control of the armed forces”(DCAF). DCAF is thus generally understood to mean subordination of the armed forces to democratically elected civilians to superintend a given country’s affairs. In its fullest sense, it means that all decisions regarding the defense of the country – the organization, deployment, and use of the armed forces; the setting of military priorities and requirements; and the allocation of the necessary resources – are made by democratic leadership and scrutinized by the legislative body. This is done in order to ensure support and legitimacy, the ultimate aim being to ensure armed forces serve the societies they protect, and that military policies and capabilities

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<sup>47</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 83.

are consistent with political objectives and economic resources.<sup>48</sup> Democratic civilian control is therefore done through a well-articulated hierarchy between civil authority and the military. This hierarchy emphasizes a form of consolidated bureaucratic organization. Normatively, democratic control provides transparency, and spells out responsibilities between the military and civilian authority over issues of defense policy, budgets, programs and the professional execution of policy. Civilian control of the military is thus considered a prerequisite for democratic governance.

## **1. The Current Matrix**

Botswana's generic law provides for a strong presidency with wide-ranging executive powers. Section 48 of the constitution provides that the president is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.<sup>49</sup> The president is further empowered by the Botswana Defense Force Act to appoint the commander of the BDF and other senior officers of lieutenant colonel rank and above. Subsection 8 (2) restricts the operational use of the BDF to the president. The Act further provides that the president may delegate such responsibility as he may think fit to the commander. In addition, a Defense Council, established per section 8(1) of the BDF Act<sup>50</sup> is charged with the control, direction and superintendence of the force, and acts as an advisory body to the president on defense. The council is appointed by the president and is not statutorily mandated to report to parliament. The Defense Council has no staffers. Since its creation the Council has had problems conforming to its schedule of business. If there were any records kept about its proceedings, they were scanty. Its utility to Botswana's contemporary landscape is questionable.<sup>51</sup> The Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, an extension of the presidency, is theoretically responsible for the day-to-day running of the

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<sup>48</sup> Simon Lunn, "The Democratic Control of the Armed Forces in Principle and Practice," in *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Vol.1, No.4 December, 2002 (Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes), p.83.

<sup>49</sup> *Constitution of Botswana: Chap.1* (Gaborone: Government Printer), p.00: 31.

<sup>50</sup> *Botswana Defense Force Act Chapter 21:05* (Gaborone: Government Printer), p. 21:177.

<sup>51</sup> Similar reservations about the utility of the Defense Council have been raised, inter alia, by Maj. General J.G.Tlhokwane, "Civil-Military Relations in Botswana: The Concept, Analysis and Characterization," A Paper Presented to University of Botswana Final Year Political Science Students, University of Botswana, Gaborone on November 27, 2003; and Tendekani E. Malebeswa, "Civil Control of the Military in Botswana," in Rocky Williams, et al, (eds.), *Ourselves To Know: Civil-Military Relations and Defense Transformation in Southern Africa*.  
<http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Books/OurselvesToKnow/Malebeswa.pdf> (Accessed 01/29/2004).

BDF. The relationship between the president and the Minister of PAPA on defense is not very clear. Currently the military (over 10,000) and the police (approximately 6000) are administered from the same office. In addition the same ministry is responsible for the civil service. As part of the state bureaucracy the military alone constitutes the second largest formal sector employer after the civil service.<sup>52</sup> Under the current there is no permanent staff solely dedicated to managing or attending to defense issues on a day-to-day basis. Management of defense is therefore ad hoc. Instead, all administrative work of the military from recruitment, budgeting to acquisition, training and operations is done at BDF headquarters. While other components of the state bureaucracy have grown in size and complexity, defense has remained static.

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) also plays a major role in controlling the military and acts as an extension of executive control and oversight. The ministry exercises fiscal discipline and scrutinizes and allocates the military budget along with those of other line ministries and departments. Like other budget submissions, the BDF's budget is subjected to the same rigors that ordinarily apply to all other departments despite its peculiarities. It is not a farfetched imagination to conclude that given the level of expertise on defense budgeting in this ministry, there are a lot of specifications within the budget that are beyond the comprehension of the staffers.

Likewise, the parliamentary watchdog role is feeble. The two key oversight instruments, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the committee of foreign affairs, trade and security are weak and have been overrun by the executive more often.<sup>53</sup> They

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<sup>52</sup> Mpho Molomo, "Civil-Military Relations in Botswana's Developmental State," op cit, p.3

<sup>53</sup> See Sandy Grant and Brian Egner, "The Private Press and Democracy," in John Holm and Patrick Molutsi (eds) *Democracy in Botswana* (Athens Ohio: Botswana Society and Ohio University Press, 1990), p.250 allude to the fact that details of the BDF's budgetary requirements are not publicly available and are only sketchily considered in the National Assembly. See also Staff Writer, "BDF Chases Away Auditors," *Mmegi* Vol. 12, No.20, 26 May-1 June 1995. On issues of parliamentary independence from the executive, see Letshwiti Tutwane, "Parliament Demands Independence," in *Mmegi Online* <http://www.mmegi.bw/2004/March/Monday15/8153229341516.html> (accessed 03/17/2004).

also lack expertise on defense. Legislatures have an important role to play in the formulation of defense and military policy, as well as monitoring its implementation. Input into the policy process from broad-based sectors of society legitimizes policy and helps develop consensus. The needs of society and the military are more likely to be balanced to the extent that representatives from all segments of society are consulted in the policy process.<sup>54</sup> However, parliamentary oversight of the military is conspicuously weak in Botswana.

This institutional framework poses a number of problems. First, it concentrates too much power over the military in the presidency. Critiques have argued that to entrust the national security and defense of the country in one office with such immense powers is unhealthy for democracy.<sup>55</sup> The current arrangement also gives the presidency unilateral power on officer promotions without the involvement of parliament. As such, organizational power is inappropriately distributed in favor of the executive, while marginalizing the elected representatives. This is no doubt, a fundamental departure from democratic practice. This obviously opens the system to possible abuse as the incumbent may use this latitude to build loyalties in order to control the military. Further, this power asymmetry limits democratic participation by other elected officials in the development of the military and defense policy. In the process democratic accountability on a major consumer of national resources is undermined. At the end of the day, democratic control of the military is seriously compromised. As Giraldo rightly points out, “the need for the legislature to approve and review expenditures is a permanent source of influence.”<sup>56</sup> When the same legislature fails in this key role, especially over a powerful sector of the state that consumes substantially high expenditure averages of the national budget, then there is reason for alarm.

Secondly, the framework undermines administrative efficiency and effectiveness on national defense matters. It perpetuates military development through

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<sup>54</sup> Jeanne K. Giraldo, “Legislatures and Defense: The Comparative Experience,” Occasional Paper #8 (Monterey, California: The Center for Civil Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School, June, 2001), p.5.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. See also Kenneth Good, op cit.

<sup>56</sup> Jeanne K. Giraldo, “Defense Budgets and Civilian Oversight,” Occasional Paper # 9, (Monterey, California: The Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School, June, 2001), p.6.

professionalization without simultaneously developing civilian expertise on the military and defense. The current over-involvement of the military in defense policy emanates from this problematique. Moreover, the arrangement denies military and civilian staffers to interact at par under a professional work environment where they would share expertise and influence defense policy on an authoritative position. An institutional tapestry bringing civilian and military expertise together is desirable for a number of reasons. Primarily, it creates new working relationships that are vital in civil-military relations. Such relations are building blocks for mutual understanding and trust between the military and its political masters. Even more importantly, this military-civilian marriage promotes cumulative knowledge and management expertise on defense.

Under the current framework the uniform approach to expenditure control and management has a major weakness. It generalizes about all departments based on financial and administrative controls of the budget process. As a result it neglects the underlying factors peculiar to each department, more so to defense. Under the current arrangement, it is evident that given the number of departments that fall under the Office of the President, there is inadequate attention given to the details of the defense budget, especially in the long term. M.D. Hobkirk provides recommendations for defense organization that take account of the peculiarities of defense:

- A powerful central policy and planning staff (with service officers and civilian administrators and scientists) to plan defense policy, the budget and weapon systems;
- A planning, programming and budgeting system with functional categories or programs directly related to the specific tasks of the armed forces;
- A long-term multi-year budget system to provide as stable an environment as possible for future plans; and
- d) A full-career civilian bureaucracy of administrators and scientists to operate the system in equal partnership with their service colleagues.<sup>57</sup>

The benefits of a bureaucracy outlined by Hobkirk are conspicuously absent in Botswana's defense management system.

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<sup>57</sup> M.D. Hobkirk, *The Politics of Defense Budgeting: A Study of Organization and Resource Allocation in the United Kingdom and the United States*. (London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1983), p.131.

Despite the high averages of defense expenditure over the years, there are indications both within the military and in government that a lot could be done to improve this trend. In the absence of a tangible military doctrine, a defense policy, and national security strategy, it is difficult to measure the cost of the military against anything. The formula is simply not there. The point to be emphasized here is that while the need for better infrastructure and equipment may be justifiable in a given time frame, especially given the young history of the BDF, the political obligation to ensure efficient and effective utilization of these comparatively immense resources remains omnipresent. Given institutional biases, the possibility for underjudgement or overjudgement of the defense realm cannot be overruled.

Thirdly, defense and policing are two distinct and sensitive roles of the state to be jointly administered together. Doing so may simply blur the distinction between the two and compromise the objective development of both. Similarly, the civil service is a different entity of the state bureaucracy and should not be mixed with either one of the two, especially given its size vis-a-vis the two.

Finally, the absence of a defense bureaucracy also means that there is no unit that promotes research in both academic and policy discourses on the military and defense in the country. Research and documentation are fundamental tenets of institutions. They provide the lifeblood to institutional reform and development, and promote a culture of learning about the military and its technologies. They give the institution a recreative ability that transcends generations.

The net result of the current arrangement is that defense and security is crowded by other demands and is not given the due attention it deserves. The peculiarity of national defense dictates that it be handled by a defense bureaucracy solely dedicated and responsible for it. This is because defense is not just another spending department.<sup>58</sup> Its uniqueness comes with its structure, organization, employment of resources and cultural values and norms. The “management of violence” is a vocation in its own right and carries with it, characteristics and qualities that are complex and intricate. Such peculiarity must gain recognition even at the political superstructure. Under the current

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<sup>58</sup> See Simon Lunn, *op cit*, p.86.

arrangement, the military has largely been as all the other sectors of the public service, and has consequently been denied a bureaucracy attuned to its specificity. To this extent, the BDF has enjoyed immense autonomy to influence and/or even determine key aspects of defense policy from recruitment to procurement policy whereas it is supposed to implement them. In essence the BDF ‘bakes its own cake and eats it.’ In addition, the arrangement absolves itself from executing the continuous daily checks and balances of a higher political structure over the military and defense. It is not therefore unreasonable to imagine that the window of abuse for patronage and graft within the BDF remains open. The number of trial cases relating to abuse of office, both within the military legal system and in the civilian courts, is telling of the depth of this dilemma.<sup>59</sup>

As a result of these weaknesses, the military has continued to enjoy considerable autonomy. In fact, there are indications that on a number of occasions strategic policy issues have been referred to the BDF command where the expectation was that political authority would be the lead decision maker in the process. Examples help illustrate this weak institutional portrait. Some observers have argued that the decision to build Thebephatshwa Air Base (other wise known as “Operation Silver Eagle”) near Molepolole is a clear indication of the remarkable degree of autonomy that the BDF enjoys. According to *Africa Confidential*, the BDF independently concluded that Botswana’s interest required the construction of a large air force base, and prevailed in its desire to carry out the operation despite the general reduction of tensions in the sub-region and belt-tightening measures in Botswana.<sup>60</sup>

If this story is to be bought, it demonstrates how the independence of political authority over defense policy is undermined. Simply put, this relationship subordinates the political point of view to the military point of view. Undoubtedly, this composure of civil-military relations undercuts the authority of the civilian leadership to control and oversee the military. Further, this creates an imbalance in that when the “player” (in this case the BDF) determines the rules of the game, the “referee” (civilian authority) has little control over the “game.” At the political level, when such a situation obtains, the

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<sup>59</sup> Some of these cases are reported in various volumes of the Botswana Law Reports.

<sup>60</sup> *Africa Confidential*, London, February 7, 1992. For some of the implicit weaknesses of democratic oversight also see Lt. General L.M. Fisher, “The Need for a Strategic Review Commission for Botswana.” (Unpublished material).

dangers to democratic control potentially loom large. Military accountability to the civilian authority may not carry the same obligations under such weak superintendence. Perhaps this situation may be telling about what some observers have referred to as “the overbearing influence of the military in the country’s politics.”<sup>61</sup> Democratically elected representatives should have the final word on all defense matters without being pushed by the military. Constitutionally they are the bearers of legitimate authority. As Clausewitz warned, the ends for which the military body is employed are outside its competence to judge. Indeed,

The subordination of the political point of view to the military would be unreasonable, for policy has created the war; policy is the intelligent faculty, war only the instrument, and not the reverse.<sup>62</sup>

## **2. Civil Society and the Oversight Role**

Civil society can and indeed should play an important, though indirect, role in regulation, control and oversight. The input of civil society in the realm of public policy is seen as a hallmark of pluralist liberal democracy.<sup>63</sup> The media has vehemently challenged government on defense issues especially on transparency, especially in view of the fact that political opposition is weak and the parliamentary watchdog role has been eroded.<sup>64</sup> The large military budget that the BDF continues to enjoy has also been a major area of contest. In 1998 when Botswana sent troops to Lesotho as part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) intervention force, the civil and political society challenged the failure by the executive to consult parliament.<sup>65</sup> Despite rebuttal from government, the issue was a serious indication of the importance of the media as a watchdog of democratic governance. The Democracy Research Project of the

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<sup>61</sup> See Mpho G. Molomo, op cit. Log Raditlhokwa writing in the *Botswana Gazette* of July, 28, 1993 also decried the weakness of state institutions in limiting the growing influence of the military in politics.

<sup>62</sup> Otto von Clausewitz, quoted in Samuel Huntington, op cit, p.58

<sup>63</sup> Algirdas Gričius and Kestutis Paulauskas, “Democratic Control of the Armed Forces in Lithuania,” in *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Vol.1, No.4 December 2002 (Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes), p.52.

<sup>64</sup> See *The Botswana Guardian*, 12 January 2000; and *Mmegi*, 4 February 2000.

<sup>65</sup> For the parliamentary debate on this issue refer to *Hansard No. 128 Part I*, 9-13 November 1998.

University of Botswana is also an important forum of civic oversight of the military.<sup>66</sup> The project has undertaken several research efforts on issues of governance in general which have touched on national security and defense. Similarly, the University's Southern African Defense and Security Management forum (SADSEM) has organized seminars and workshops to promote discourse on national security issues in the country and sensitize participants on civil-military relations.<sup>67</sup>

To this extent, civil society, particularly the media, has contributed to increasing awareness about the military and its relationship with government and the society it is intended to protect. Arguably, this has added to the growing pressure on government to consider a Defense Review. Contrary to the understanding that, "Civil Society and the armed forces must be constantly exposed to one another and should maintain an open and transparent dialogue,"<sup>68</sup> this relationship has been cumbersome, and full of mistrust. Emang Basadi, a women's rights non-governmental organization, has also been instrumental in the fight for integrating women in the military. In part, the recent decision by government to move in this direction comes as a result of their tireless efforts. Indeed, the enlisting of women in the army would mark a milestone in the gender war Botswana women have waged since the 1990's.<sup>69</sup>

Notwithstanding these achievements, civil society in Botswana is generally weak and does not have a strong voice. Comparatively speaking, civil society groups in Botswana are not as developed as in other African countries.<sup>70</sup> There has generally been lack of constructive debate about issues of the military in Botswana. A number of country-dependent variables have been linked to this. Some observers have associated this with the fairly young and relatively undeveloped military culture in the country.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The Democracy Research Project (DRP) is a non-partisan, multi-disciplinary research group that derives its membership from the faculties of Social Science and Humanities at the University of Botswana. Among others, it conducts opinion polls, surveys and symposia on democracy and governance in Botswana and in the region.

<sup>67</sup> See Zibani Maundeni, et al, op cit.

<sup>68</sup> George G. Beddie, "A Principal Lesson of Civil-Military Relations," A Paper presented to the Conference on Civil-Military in Latin America. (American University of International Service, 1995).

<sup>69</sup> Letshwiti Tutwane, op cit. (accessed 2/10/2004)

<sup>70</sup> Zibani Maundeni, et al, op cit, p.4.

<sup>71</sup> Maj.Gen. Tlhokwane, for example, alluded to this feature of Botswana's civil-military relations in his presentation, op cit, p.14

Others submit that in general, civil society in Botswana is readily co-opted into state structures, lacks a strong grass-roots base, and is prepared to work within the parameters deemed permissible by the state-and not beyond.<sup>72</sup>

Nonetheless the need for reforms is an important calling for Botswana's democracy. There is need for heightened political participation, a stronger civil society and popular decision-making in general, and on the military and national security in particular. Although security policy is highly centralized within the president's office, a broader debate over the nature of the country's security situation, whether it is to do with HIV/AIDS, a rising crime and/or growing refugee inflows from Zimbabwe, mean that security is a hot topic in contemporary Botswana.<sup>73</sup> The net result of civil society's input is the 'conscious voice of the enlightened' impressing upon the state the need for open debate on the military and greater participation of the citizenry in the national security matrix. This contribution, though minimal, is not negligible. It stands to reason therefore that the greater the public debates over the military and defense, the greater the measure of control and participation the citizenry has in the democratic process. This important dynamic, is however, conspicuously absent in the political landscape of Botswana.

## **G. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has underlined the importance of bureaucratization as one explanation of Botswana's developmental success. It sought to demonstrate, however, that the benefits of bureaucratization have been overstated. I have also demonstrated how the over-commitment of the state to military professionalism has contributed to underdevelopment of a defense bureaucracy. I caution that professionalism as an-all-in-one tool of democratic control without the accompanying institutional structures undermines the essence of democratic control. In fact, professionalization has serious shortfalls. It is difficult to measure, especially when there are no set benchmarks for military performance as is the case in Botswana. What for lack of a better word is the current bureaucracy for defense has remained sketchy and ad hoc despite the growth of the BDF and the rest of the state structure. The net result has been an over-development

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<sup>72</sup> Kenneth Good in his article, "Rethinking Non-Accountability and Corruption in Botswana," *Africa Insight* Vol.32 no. 3, alludes to the phenomenon of "civics that have often limped behind the state-initiated endeavors, their role and contribution frequently discouraged by politicians and bureaucrats."

<sup>73</sup> Zibani Maundeni, op cit, p.25.

of the military through professionalization without the simultaneous development of civilian expertise on the military. Consequently, this skewed approach has rendered defense management and democratic control inefficient and ineffective. I have also underlined the power imbalances between parliament and the executive in the current arrangement, and demonstrated how they undermine democratic accountability and oversight. Overall, the military enjoys a lot of autonomy and thus has overbearing influence in defense policy because of lack of civilian expertise in governance. Such an imbalance is unhealthy for democracy. Finally, I have acknowledged the role of civil society as an important democratic watchdog in filling the institutional gap of oversight. However, there is need for more active engagement in this area. At the end of it all, the challenges for democratic control of the military remain. As more and more citizens get enlightened and fulfill their civic obligation, it becomes evident that there is a lot of 'house-keeping' yet to be done. Check alignment all the way through

The huge weaknesses in Botswana's institutional matrix of democratic control have largely gone unnoticed by those who are overly excited about the country's success. This is so mainly because the leadership, both political and within the military has heretofore not taken serious advantage of this institutional inadequacy. Political pundits have also used the leadership variable to account for Botswana's success. The next chapter focuses on elite cohesion and the evolution of the state to show why the country cannot continue to count on the integrity of leadership alone to sustain healthy civil-military relations and democratic governance.

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### **III. OF CONTRASTS AND ANIMATIONS: ELITE COHESION, STATE EVOLUTION AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter explores the role that political and military elites in shaping the evolution of the state and civil-military relations. The chapter argues that elite cohesion has compensated for institutional weaknesses in consolidating state evolution and maintaining healthy civil-military relations. Over the years, the size of both the political and military elites has resulted in over-arching elite cohesion. This cohesion has contributed to overall state stability, despite institutional weaknesses of democratic control. Consequently this relative institutional stability has led to the moderate ability to diffuse tensions over national defense policy and democratic civilian control. Luckily, there have not been any attempts by either side to take advantage of the institutional gap and abuse it to the detriment of the state. Yet the potential challenges of abuse remain omnipresent.

This analysis considers two comparative case studies that have been defining moments of state evolution. These historical are important time-blocks in attempting to understand the development of the post-colonial state in Botswana. First the study examines the first two decades of independence (1966-1986) in order to demonstrate the marked differences of evolving elite politics and its impact on governance. This period marked a significant beginning of state development. The state bureaucracy was fairly small. There was a high degree of elite homogeneity and cohesion. Consequently, leadership was more in control and could enforce elite discipline. On the civil-military relations side there were few domestic issues to contend with given the threat perception and the development of the military. The threat was primarily seen in the context of invasions from Southern Rhodesia and other hot spots in the region. Thus with this external threat orientation of the state, civil-military tensions were more diffused. Political organization was still in its infancy. Civil society was a very small and weak block.

Next the focus shifts to the 1990's and beyond. Here, significant landmarks of contrast from the previous epoch are highlighted. The 1990's are an important turning

point in the evolution of the state in Botswana. This period ushered in a new dynamic into the country's politics where the state was heavily challenged more than ever before. Unlike in the first two decades, several weaknesses of the state were exposed. Corruption scandals emerged. Growing elite decontraction and fragmentation gave way to the emergence of internal party polarization, in both the opposition and the ruling party elites. State policy and democratic accountability were heavily challenged. As the elites and the bureaucracy grew in size and complexity, the "glue" that held the elites together and rendered state policy more unitary, lost strength and could no longer hold. A changing threat orientation of the state (internal crime, HIV/Aids) helped a better focus of the analytical lenses on defense and national security. As political and civil society began to assert itself, the weaknesses of the state were exposed even more. Consequently there developed "cracks" in the system, exposing in the process, the weakness of the state and inherent weaknesses of democratic control of the military. Invariably, these dynamics challenge the conventional wisdom of Botswana's uniqueness as a "model of success", "An African Miracle", a "rare bird", and call for a reconsideration of the variables of analysis.

#### **B. ELITE COHESION AND STATE EVOLUTION IN THE FORMATIVE DECADES 1966-1986**

At independence, Botswana's political elite comprised a fairly small aggregate of commercial cattle ranching interests, the educated Tswana elite, the traditionalists (chiefs), and the colonial public service. The small size of the dominant class, its narrow and relatively homogeneous economic base and common ideological views provided a basis for unity.<sup>74</sup> These class aggregates were significantly small and thus able to converge fairly well and aggregate themselves for political control of the state. As Samatar notes, the unity of the dominant class and the peasantry's disorganization are two critical concepts in understanding the way in which state-civil society relations evolved in Botswana.<sup>75</sup> Parson buttresses this point, noting that the unity of this class was a result of gross underdevelopment of the colonial period ...[and] absolutely modest

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<sup>74</sup> Abdi Ismail Samatar, *An African Miracle: State and Class Leadership and Colonial Legacy in Botswana Development* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999) p.71.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*

expectations in the early post-colonial period.<sup>76</sup> In essence these elites were a less heterogeneous group and were thus able to strike ‘a mutual pact’ in the running of the state primarily because of their backgrounds. They came largely from the major tribes of the country whose political legitimacy also enjoys support from the traditional kingship connections and lineages. Some enjoyed traditional royal status, but the majority came from prominent families in their communities.<sup>77</sup> This anatomy is important in understanding the evolution of the post-independence state, its search for legitimacy and stability, and power configurations within the state. Further, the anatomy is pertinent in appreciating the patterns of civil-military relations and institutional formulae of democratic control of the military.

Arguably the elites were much privileged relative to the rest of the population because they were better educated, wealthier, and of higher ethnic and royal status.<sup>78</sup> As such they had comparative advantage over the rest of the population. This sense of belonging and their comparative advantage provided the “magical glue” that made them a relatively more homogenous entity in the formative years of the state. Thus elite cohesion was stronger in the formative years. The overall impact was that there were few or no disputes at all, but more commonality of interests over state policy. Given a weak industrial base of the state, it became apparent that the formal state sector was the most lucrative employment opportunity for many. As a result, the core of the elite was to be located mainly in the state sector. These “New Men”<sup>79</sup> articulated a vision for the people of Botswana grounded on the basis of a “strong post-independence state, aggressive pursuit of economic growth, fiscal discipline and an expanded, professional government bureaucracy.”<sup>80</sup> This leadership, blessed with the advantage of resources (particularly mineral discoveries in the mid-seventies and a favorable international environment),

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<sup>76</sup> See Jack Parson, *Botswana: Liberal Democracy and the Labor Reserve in Southern Africa* (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), p.87.

<sup>77</sup> Patrick Molutsi, “Whose Interest Do Botswana Politicians Represent?” in John Holm and Patrick Mulutsi, eds, *Democracy in Botswana: The Proceedings of a Symposium held in Gaborone, 1-5 August 1988* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989), p.122.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Pierre du Toit, *State Building and Democracy in Southern Africa: Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute for Peace, 1995), p.44.

<sup>80</sup> Abdi Ismael Samatar, *op cit.*

managed to steer the country from the impoverished state in which it found itself at independence. Through five-year national development plans, government was able to articulate a robust and meticulous development path for the country. The small group of elites worked in concert with zeal and determination, sharing a common vision of development. Molutsi and Parson demonstrate how this group had compatible agendas from independence into the second decade.<sup>81</sup>

During this period, intra-party politics were fairly seamless. The political landscape was mainly contested by three parties. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), formed in 1962 was able to garner nation wide support, primarily because of the relatively homogenous economic interests of its leadership and their ideological orientation and kingship connections. The party appealed to a wide constituency of voters particularly because it was seen as more moderate compared to the opposition. As a result, it was able to consolidate its gains and make mileage out of this strength. Because of elite cohesion within its structures, the BDP was able to make significant in routes into the rural areas and legitimize its power over the fairly weak opposition. As the incumbent party, it also gained popularity through more and more development programs that were implemented. In the first general elections in 1965, the BDP won 28 of the 31 seats. It was continuously returned to power in the elections that followed with a wide margin against the opposition. In 1984 the opposition managed to win a modest 5 seats against the ruling party's 29.<sup>82</sup> In the 1989 elections, the scales were still in favor of the BDP. The BNF, weakened by internal feuds only managed a paltry three seats. Five other parties could not win a single seat. This has meant that Botswana has been a *de facto* predominant party system since independence.<sup>83</sup> The absence of well-organized and mobilized social groups that could challenge the dominance of the ruling class also glorified this elite unity. Civil society has been poorly developed and disorganized, and democratic input weak.<sup>84</sup> The consequent has also been that the state would largely determine the direction of development undeterred.

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<sup>81</sup> Jack Parson, op cit. See also Patrick Molutsi, op cit.

<sup>82</sup> *New African YEARBOOK 1995-1996*, (London:IC Magazines, 1995-96), p. 51.

<sup>83</sup> Zibani Maundeni, et al, op cit, p.2.

<sup>84</sup> John Holm and Patrick Molutsi, op cit.

At the formative years of the state, Seretse Khama's eminence as a chief, a cattle owner, and an educated Motswana meant that because of his "many hats" he transcended the class divides within the elite clique, and also reached out to the ordinary citizens with his appeal. This simply legitimized his leadership over the elites and made him unchallengeable. In the absence of a challenger within the elites he was able to steer politics fairly ably within this state-class cohesion. A reported case of corruption in the early years of the independence serves to illustrate this reverence and further shows the robustness of elite class policing and restraint then. In the 1970's after the discovery of diamonds, Minister Segokgo, then responsible for minerals and water affairs, was allegedly implicated in the disappearance of diamonds. President Khama is alleged to have told him that he "owed the people of Botswana an explanation" over the allegations. The message was loud and clear. The minister's career and his credibility were hanging in the balance. The minister committed suicide a few days later. This was a clear signal that the leadership did not tolerate corruption, and could also effectively enforce sanctions against such behavior. The bottom line is that the ability of the leadership, both at the party and the state levels, to influence outcomes was more pronounced because of the unitary nature of the elite clique.

The weak support base and poor organization of the opposition also gave the ruling party an easy ride to prominence, further boosting its legitimacy and the mandate to influence the direction of state development. The Botswana Peoples' Party (BPP), the country's first political party formed in 1960, and the Botswana Independence Party (BIP) enjoyed minimal support, especially in the northern part of the country where they were primarily based. For the most part during this era, the Botswana National Front (BNF) was the main opposition in parliament. The BNF was formed by, among others, a splinter faction from the BPP in 1965, a phenomenon that would become a major characterizing feature of opposition politics in years to come. Because of their leftist orientation, opposition parties did not readily appeal to the electorate then as they were seen as radical. Their performance in the formative years of independent Botswana was fairly weak. Historically the opposition has been marred by interminable intra-party squabbles and fragmentation often leading to the formation of splinter parties. As such, the lack of a strong and robust opposition meant that the ruling party's hegemony over

the state machinery would go largely unchecked. This phenomenon would transcend this timeframe and beyond.

### **C. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE STATE**

The context of state formation in Botswana may have also had an influence in the character of the elites and their attitudes towards national security issues. Because of indirect rule, Botswana attained independence without warfare and bloodshed. To this end, it can be argued that the elites, and the population at large, were to develop a non-militaristic predisposition to state formation as opposed to their counterparts in the rest of the region. Another interesting dichotomy is the distinguishing character of the elite between ruling party and the opposition. The opposition attracted a significant number of those that had worked or studied and got heavily involved in the liberation struggle alongside their black colleagues in the African National Congress (ANC), Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), or had studied in the communist block. Several of these joined socialist parties such as the BPP, BIP and BNF, and were leading advocates of the creation of the military at independence. By contrast, the ruling party elites were vehemently opposed to this idea. Coupled with fear of military take-overs endemic in the rest of Africa then, this dynamic partially explains the perceived reluctance in creating an army. Such perceptions also help explain the adoption of certain policy postures in the new state such as centralization of power, and attitudes towards women integration in the military, and the development of a defense bureaucracy in later years.

In the years following the creation of the BDF, it was to become evident that the costs of militarization did not matter so much as did maintaining a skewed balance of power within state institutions. The power configuration in the executive remained centralized and was further entrenched as the state bureaucracy grew bigger. Centralization was also seen as a cost-effective measure in bureaucratization. Meanwhile, the diamond boom and a favorable international market enabled the state to develop its military power substantially, yet keeping a firm grip over it through centralized command. The focus on professionalization, infrastructure development and upgrading the army's technology was to become the main preoccupation of the state. As expenditure figures show, a great deal of resources went into these key aspects. This shift of

paradigms was largely due to the stable political-military elite alliance and the cumulative trust that has been built over time. This alliance has continued to sustain a relatively healthy civil-military relations balance in the void of a defense bureaucracy, weak legislative oversight, the moribund Defense Council, and a civil society constituency that was still learning how to stand on its feet.

Within a decade of its creation, the BDF grew in size from a paltry 300 men to about 4000. The resolve by the state at early stage to create a professional and well-disciplined army marked an important relationship between the military in its early development with the political leadership. General Merafhe, with the support of government trained his officers and men in well-credited institutions in the west.<sup>85</sup> This era, though a good start, was characterized by “muddling through” in that there was a lot of new ground to cover in the development of the military. Such stewardship was instrumental in building the army that was to characterize post-colonial Botswana. Given the nature of the threat, the military focus was mainly on developing fighting capabilities. Despite its shortfalls, the BDF defended the country and was a credible deterrent against aggression, and an important assurance of growing state strength. An important relationship of asserting civilian supremacy over the armed forces was also established. Most importantly, a politico-military elite alliance was established. The bureaucracy responsible for the military was at this time sketchy to say the least. The terrain of civil-military relations was a completely new one. The ‘navigating team’ was also new in the field. A lot was done to borrow from experiences elsewhere in the world to help build the military and assert control. Nevertheless a major breakthrough was attained in setting the stage for the future.

An interesting development took place in 1979, two years after the formation of the BDF. Brigadier Ian Khama, then deputy commander of the BDF, was installed as

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<sup>85</sup> See Boubakar N'Diaye, *op cit*, p.76.

chief of the Bangwato tribe.<sup>86</sup> This development was a landmark in the political history of independent Botswana. As both a military commander and chief, Ian Khama would also wear “many hats” like his father. In this dual role he was to cement the politico-military elite cohesion and ensure state stability. At an early age of twenty-six, he had been “inserted into the hierarchy of the military as second-in-command”<sup>87</sup> in what Picard calls “...a demonstration of political adroitness and adaptability of the state.”<sup>88</sup> Five years prior to the formation of the BDF, he was the first Motswana to be trained at the Sandhurst Military Academy, a deliberate move by his father to ensure added military loyalty to the state.<sup>89</sup>

This political callousness would underlie the over-arching relationship between the military and civilian elites. The connection established would become a key feature of state evolution in subsequent years. The growing military-political elite cohesion would underexpose institutional weaknesses of democratic control. As shall be demonstrated later, the “Khama magic” would become a key ingredient in the recipe for state stability, especially in the 1990’s. Nonetheless, in the late 1980’s it was becoming evident that cohesion in the politico-military elites and state was being seriously challenged. Significant changes would, however emerge in the 1990’s.

#### **D. ‘CONTRASTS AND ANIMATIONS’: STATE CONSOLIDATION OR FRAGMENTATION?**

The 1990’s have been a period of reckoning both for the political and military elites. Fragmentation and decontraction in the elite cohort, both in the ruling and opposition parties, became increasingly elaborate as intra-party squabbles intensified. The size of the elites was growing considerably. Their interests were also becoming

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<sup>86</sup> See Gys Dubbeld, *They Fought for Freedom: Seretse Khama* (Pinelands, Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1992), p.58. Also see Charles H. Cutter, (ed.), *The World Today Series: Africa 1998* 33<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Stryker-Post Publications, 1998), p.102. For the development of this phenomenon in later years, see John D. Holm, “Traditional Authority: Its Ambivalent Role in Botswana Politics,” A paper prepared for delivery at a panel entitled Democratization from Below: What Role for Non-Liberal Forms of Social capital and Voluntary Association at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual meeting of the African Studies Association in Philadelphia, PA, November 11-14, 1999, pp. 11-12.

<sup>87</sup> Boubakar N’Diaye, op cit, p.79.

<sup>88</sup> Louis Picard, *The Politics of Development in Botswana: A Model for Success?* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1987), p.12.

<sup>89</sup> See Samuel Decalo, “Towards Understanding the Sources of Stable Civilian Rule in Africa: 1960-1990.” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 10, No.1, 1991), p.80.

diverse as investment opportunities broadened. Agriculture, while remaining the dominant sector was slowly facing competition from commerce, and other opportunities that were hitherto absent. A younger generation of the elite was infused into the party structures bringing elements of radicalism that were not commonplace before. Internal party stability would suffer serious setbacks in the 1990's however, as major currents of turbulence began to show on the political landscape of the country. The 1991 Palapye BDP Congress heralded an unprecedented era of intense intra-party struggles. One of the key features of the congress was an emerging north-south divide in the contest for party political office against the "old guard" and the "modernizers".<sup>90</sup>

By the early 1990's, the opposition had made significant in routes in broadening its support base. This was particularly so in the urban areas where the labor movement had put its weight behind the opposition given its frustration with the party in power. In the 1994 elections, the BNF scored an unprecedented victory scooping 13 seats in parliament. This therefore meant that the opposition had a bigger voice in parliament and could therefore challenge government from a stronger fort. Normatively, this meant an improvement in governance and state accountability. However, this development was short lived. The opposition was soon engulfed in yet another power feud. The historic Palapye conference in the run-up to the 1999 national elections shattered the hopes of a growing opposition for the country's democracy. The BNF was polarized to a point of no return. Consequently the "concerned group" broke away, forming the Botswana Congress Party. Eleven of the 13 opposition members defected to the new party leaving the BNF with a minority in the National Assembly. Thus the BCP became the main opposition. The BCP's glory was, however, short lived as most of the legislators in the previous government lost their seats in the elections and returned the role of main opposition to the BNF. The BDP has nevertheless maintained its relative hegemony in the political playing field.

Similarly, signals began to show in the ruling party that the "happy elite marriage" and its honeymoon days were over. State institutions showed signs of decay and developed fault-lines, especially with the emergence of elite corruption. The

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<sup>90</sup> See NewAfrican, op cit.

corruption scandals included, among other things, illegal land deals in which cabinet ministers and other key figures in the state machinery were implicated. They also involved abuse of public office at the Botswana Housing Corporation, and the National Development Bank.<sup>91</sup> These revelations sent shock waves in the state bureaucracy and put Botswana's accountability mechanisms and corruption levels on the international political spotlight. This spate of corruption marked a significant departure from previous levels of discipline and political leadership in the state. They were indicative of declining elite cohesion and rising institutional weaknesses. In all the cases, "gross mismanagement and dishonesty"<sup>92</sup> in the state bureaucracy involving the elite was clear.

At this point, it became increasingly clear that the elites were no longer able to hold tight together and police themselves. The "glue" simply lost its viscosity and adhesiveness. The over-arching cohesion was simply no longer amenable. As Good points out, "internal government checking mechanisms were either absent or ineffective."<sup>93</sup> In addition, the emergence of good investigative reporting hitherto unseen in the country, helped boost the watchdog role of civil society and put the state under greater scrutiny. The rippling effects of these revelations also undermined internal party unity. Because of their implications in the land scandals, ministers Kwelagobe and Mmusi resigned on 8 March 1992 and also lost their party posts. They were reinstated at the Palapye Congress, Mmusi becoming party chairman and Kwelagobe secretary-general respectively. This was considered a major victory for the "old guard" who were mainly supported by the party structures and the cattle owning elite. This restoration, so soon after the major land scandal caused severe strains in the party,<sup>94</sup> clearly indicated that elite cohesion was on the doldrums.

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<sup>91</sup> See Kenneth Good, "Rethinking Non-Accountability and Corruption in Botswana," *Africa Insight*, Vol.32, No.3, p.14. These developments are captured in Republic of Botswana, *Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry Into Land Problems in Peri-Urban Villages* (Government Printer, Gaborone: 13 December, 1991). For a further analysis of the corruption problem, see Kenneth Good, "Corruption and Mismanagement in Botswana: Best-Case Example?" in the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.32, No.3, 1994, pp.502-503.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> See *New African YEARBOOK 1999/2000* (London, United Kingdom: IC Publications, 1999-2000), p.46.

As the elite feud intensified, General Khama retired from the BDF in 1998 and was inserted into the ruling party to stabilize the feud.<sup>95</sup> He was seen as a neutral player. It was hoped that as a disciplinarian from the military, he would bring the party's house to order and salvage the waning elite cohesion. The extent to which his insertion has helped the party is a moot case, especially given the further polarization of the party in recent months. Political analysts have argued that his recruitment into government leadership has exacerbated the tensions within the BDP and the public service.<sup>96</sup> The run-up to the Ghantsi conference in 2003, and its aftermath was a further manifestation of the intensification of the elite divide.

More recently the introduction of a more transparent inner-party voting system in the BDP known as *bulela ditswe* (meaning free for all) in the recent primary elections has been an important test of inner-party democracy in Botswana.<sup>97</sup> The system, copied from the opposition where it has also been a keg of dynamite, has not only ushered in a new development in the demographics of those eligible for contesting for power. It has also allowed a more youthful constituent of testers for political office. By opening the floodgates, the system has undermined the foothold of the party old guard who has always enjoyed the comfort of being unanimously returned to power term after term. In a sense, it tops up challenges to the over-arching elite cohesion that has bolstered state stability over the years. The test for inner-party democracy has been a major test for elite cohesion. The polarization it has caused is a signal of declining elite cohesion.

#### **E. THE CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS DILEMMA: THE 1990'S AND BEYOND**

Beyond the first two decades of state evolution, problems of civil-military relations have intensified. Issues of military service conditions and pay have been a thorny development. The issues are particularly new in the history of the Botswana and have added a new twist to the otherwise relatively calm civil-military relations of the time. They have washed away the notion that Botswana's military "has never threatened

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<sup>95</sup> See Charles H. Cutter, op cit., and Kenneth Good, *The Liberal Model and Africa*, op cit, p.18.

<sup>96</sup> See *The Botswana Gazette*, 8 December 1999.

<sup>97</sup> Zibani Maundeni, et al, op cit, p.6. For more insights into elite fragmentation in recent months see Spencer Mogapi and Batlhalefi Leagajang *The Botswana Gazette Online* [http://www.gazette.bw/tbg\\_head2.htm](http://www.gazette.bw/tbg_head2.htm) (accessed 3/14/04).

the civilian and constitutional order.”<sup>98</sup> The credibility of the demands advanced is not a subject of this discussion. However, they represent engendered structural problems of defense management perpetuated by the institutional matrix of democratic control. The net take here is that these problems are watered down by a combination of elite cohesion, though declining, and the state’s reactive appeasement of the military.

In 1994 *Mmegi* reported allegations of a split in the BDP that was also affecting the military.<sup>99</sup> The report alleged that factions in the BDP between former BDF commander Mompoti Merafhe and BDP strongman Daniel Kwelagobe were “beginning to rock the army,” resulting in the “top brass in the army having to declare their loyalties.” The split, it was argued, was taking a north-south delineation resulting in the then Commander aligning himself with the northern faction while his deputy, Pheto, leaned towards the south. These allegations were a shock to many and marked a new political beginning. The point to take home from this is that this is evidence of growing elite fragmentation within the party structures. In the process of such turbulence, the military feels the ripples. For our analysis here, these flashpoints indicate that the politico-military elite cohesion is being eroded. When political authority cannot approach the military as a unitary establishment, then democratic control is at stake.

Almost simultaneously with the scandals on the political side of the house, allegations of public office abuse and corruption in the military also surfaced. Media accounts of alleged corruption in the procurement and acquisition systems of the military also caught the nation by surprise. In response, government was to set up a commission to investigate the allegations.<sup>100</sup> At about the same time, the Auditor General expressed frustration at his inability to access BDF accounts, rendering his capacity as an oversight mechanism for parliament wanting.<sup>101</sup> As in the case of the political elites, it became evident that the military elites were unable to police themselves despite their professionalism. Further, it was apparent that the political instruments of oversight were

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<sup>98</sup> See Richard Sklar, “On Democracy and Development in Botswana,” in John Holm and Patrick Molutsi, op cit., p.277.

<sup>99</sup> Titus Mbuya, “BDP Split Shakes Army,” *Mmegi*, Vol.11, No. 30 29-4 August, 1994,p.1.

<sup>100</sup> See Spencer Mogapi, “Mogae To Probe BDF,” in *The Botswana Gazette* [http://www.gazette.bw/tbg\\_head1.htm](http://www.gazette.bw/tbg_head1.htm) (accessed on 3/6/2003)

<sup>101</sup> Staff Writer, “BDF Chases Away Auditors,” *Mmegi* Vol.12, No. 20 26 May-1 June 1995.

equally failing. At this point also, it became questionable whether professionalism as self-restraint tool was paying off. The political will for investigating these serious allegations and acting against violators seems to be absent. At one level, problems of graft such as these attest to the dilemma of having a large organization as the BDF without an effective and well established civilian bureaucracy to police it continuously

As the saga of elite decontraction unfolded, the state faced more challenges both from within and without. In an unprecedented turn of events, the newly elected youthful legislator, Boyce Sebetela, challenged the executive for failing to consult the legislature on the deployment of the BDF in an international peacekeeping mission in Lesotho in 1998. Such a challenge was unprecedented. In a letter to the Vice President, Sebetela cautioned the VP that his ministry, Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, “should be exemplary in matters of basic democratic traditions of consultation and debate on all major decisions.”<sup>102</sup> Sebetela further warned, “When the executive becomes so powerful as to take even the legislature for granted, then there is cause for concern for the future of direct and participative democracy.” He could not have put it better. This dilemma remains a major problematique in Botswana’s civil-military relations and democratic practice.

In his political cap, Vice President Khama flies army aircraft despite the public’s concern over this flagrant abuse of office.<sup>103</sup> This has sparked debate within civil and political society questioning the power of the executive, the ombudsman, parliament and the military high command. The portrait carved in the process, is one of a polarized elite and a leadership devoid of control. Abuse of office can go unchecked or unsanctioned. Democratic governance is at stake. Democratic control of the military is equally undermined and compromised. A bad precedent is being set. Military professionalism and its self-restraining character cannot help the situation when the same pioneers of professionalization are at the core of abuse of state power.

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<sup>102</sup> Staff Writer, “Sebetela Takes Khama To Task,” *Mmegi* Vol.15 No.40, 09-15 October 1998,p.1. Also see Kenneth Good, *The Liberal Model and Africa*, op cit, p.17.

<sup>103</sup> For more insights on the issue see *The Midweek Sun*, 15 September, 1999;Mmegi 24 September, 1999; and Kenneth Good, op cit, pp.17-18.

The topography of contemporary Tswana society, and its military culture are challenging the stability of the state, undergirding the need for a refocus of analysis and approach. This problematique puts professionalization as a model of development on the spotlight. It challenges, at various levels of analysis, the extent to which professionalism is able to affect any organization, more so the military. What then has been the area of emphasis in the scheme of professionalization? Is the focus at the officer corps or soldier level or both? How much has it affected either side? Is there a disconnection in the process? More importantly for military command and control purposes, how much of the professionalism has been embedded in the junior ranks? In the final analysis, these developments validate the argument that elite cohesion is getting weaker by the day, and is less and less able to influence developments in their desired direction. More importantly, these insights render Botswana's exceptionality as a model of democracy questionable. In sum, it is clear that elite cohesion is no longer able to mask the institutional weaknesses of civilian control.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

This chapter endeavored to demonstrate the relationship between elite cohesion and the evolution of the state in Botswana. In the formative years elite cohesion was relatively high because of the small size of the elite and their common interests. Consequently, the elites were more unitary. They could also self-police one another and thus direct both party and state policy. Over time, as the size of the elite became bigger, their interests diverged, undercutting the ability of the leadership to control and discipline them. In the 1990's, I note the emergence of major fault-lines in the ruling elites. Here, the ruling party begins to experience unprecedented polarization. Consequently, state performance plummets as more and more corruption scandals surfaced. The "old guard" faces challenges from the "modernizers." The divisions in the ruling elite also affect the military, leading to transfers and retirements in an attempt to try and stabilize the establishment. The military is equally troubled internally as discontent shows its ugly face. Overall, these are indicators that all is not well in the "African Miracle." Despite all these problems, the status quo is largely kept intact by the over-arching cohesion between the military and political elites which is declining and cannot therefore be counted on as a reliable mechanism of democratic control.

The institutional lacuna remains. However it is evident that the ‘bolts’ that held the ‘body and chassis’ of state development and democratic control together cannot hold any longer, hence the need to create new structures and adopt new practices. The leadership variable alone cannot suffice to continue keeping the scales in the balance. Consequently, the civil-military relations topography typifies the metaphor ‘of contrasts and animations’ in that it portrays a deceiving portrait yet it is riddled with problems that undermine democratic governance. The next chapter proposes an institutional matrix that could help the country’s predicament. The matrix is necessary, but not sufficient for state consolidation and democratic control of the military.

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## **IV. THE SEARCH FOR A NEW INSTITUTIONAL MATRIX OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapters identified the institutional flaws of the current system of democratic civilian control of the military. It underlined the problems of over-bureaucratization of other state sectors while defense has been neglected. Moreover, it highlighted the dynamics of elite cohesion, the state-military relationship, and the challenges this interaction poses to the state through potential subjective interferences and influence. It also sought to demonstrate the military elite's contribution to the institutional gap in stabilizing civil-military relations over the years. In this sense the reader's attention is drawn to the potential policy problems of the military's autonomy in influencing defense policy. Too much autonomy compromises democratic control and political accountability.

Against the backdrop of these problems, the creation of a defense bureaucracy and the reorganization of other institutions of oversight would help streamline institutional relationships of the military and the civilian political elite. It would also provide a forum for the development of a common understanding on the role of the military and the civilian authority over policy formulation and operational issues. More importantly, the new institutional tapestry would enhance civilian expertise on military and defense issues, and thus undo the military's over-involvement in policy matters. This chapter, therefore, will endeavor to show how this reconfiguration could be done, and how it would affect the various processes involved. The role of the Defense Council should be redefined to include other sectors of national security. The council would thus have a broader mandate over national security affairs. Structures of parliamentary oversight should be redefined in order to adjust to the contemporary defense and security landscape of the country. This chapter therefore proposes a new institutional matrix of democratic civilian control. Botswana's search for a new matrix comes at a time when the domestic, regional, and international contexts are fairly conducive for such a step.

## **B. A STRATEGIC DEFENSE REVIEW**

First and foremost, the country needs to take stock of the military, its current posture and its envisaged development in the medium to long term. The fact that “some cabinet ministers are as in the dark as the man in the street about the size and direction of the BDF”<sup>104</sup> is an indication that there is a lot to be done not only in defense reform, but also in sensitizing the leadership and ordinary citizens about the military. Some ministers, it is argued, have expressed concern and lack of knowledge about the size and future projection of the BDF, yet they have at one stage held portfolios that covered the defense force.

This therefore calls for a defense review. A defense review would unpack the vexing questions that constitute the national security landscape of contemporary Botswana. A defense review would provide a blue print of government’s objective assessment and review of Botswana’s national security needs. Key amongst these would be to identify and publicize the relevant structures responsible for national security policymaking in the country. In addition the review would apply an appropriate template to rationalize the allocation of requisite resources amongst competing interests to achieve national security objectives in the most cost effective and efficient manner. The primacy of a defense review is that it is consultative, and brings together actors hitherto excluded in the defense decision-making process.<sup>105</sup> As such, it establishes a framework for strengthening the country’s civil-military relations by bringing together a diversity of opinion and critiques on national defense issues. Thus a defense review basically establishes national consensus on defense. In the words of one analyst, for defense to be effective, it requires public support and needs to command public confidence.<sup>106</sup>

The review would also present options with respect to the size, roles, missions and structure of the Botswana Defense Force. Since the creation of the BDF in 1977, a lot

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<sup>104</sup> Lt. General L.M. Fisher, “The Need for a Strategic Defense Review,” op cit, p.2.

<sup>105</sup> Rocky M. Williams, “Defense in a Democracy: The South African Defense Review and the Redefinition of the Parameters of the National Defense Debate,” in Rocky M. Williams, et al, (eds.), *Ourselves To Know: Civil-Military Relations and Defense Transformation in Southern Africa* <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Books/OurselvesToKnow/Williams.pdf> (accessed on 02/12/2004). See also Zibani Maundeni, et al, op cit, p.13.

<sup>106</sup> Sir Frank Cooper, “The Management of Defense Expenditure,” in Christoph Bertram (ed.), *Defense and Consensus: The Domestic Aspects of Western Security* (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1983), p. 57.

of changes have taken place in the national security arena as well as the regional security context. The review would therefore, identify priorities for defense, and help focus it in line with the resources required to meet those challenges. Currently the country faces a menace of rising crime, a phenomenon the police are unable to cope with on their own. To this end, the review would put the roles and missions of the military in the context of the contemporary threats facing the state. Moreover, the review would provide detailed and well-motivated budgetary forecasts and proposals to tally with the size and posture of the force. Particular attention would be paid to specific policies regarding the provisioning of logistic resources, and identifying appropriate technologies to optimize cost-effectiveness in managing the force.

Rationalizing current spending, eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and determining the most cost-effective means of managing human and material resources are also competencies of the review.<sup>107</sup> The key thing to note here is that whatever force design will be advocated by the review, it will have to be in congruence with the political, fiscal and practical realities of contemporary Botswana. To this end the review would contend with the human and material resources of the force. It would set the framework upon which equipment and human resource needs of the armed forces should be based. This would entail, inter alia, reviewing the current force structure, establishing the appropriate force composition, its future size, and reserve component. This would also tie up with the development of a policy framework for the integration of women in the BDF, and the revision of defense legislation to accommodate new developments in the defense sector.

Overall, the defense review would provide a new template of defense organization, reform and management. More importantly, the review would establish a culture of consultation and broader participation in the national security decision-making process, thus increasing civilian expertise on issues of national security. Currently, there are indications that government is seriously considering undertaking the review. In this context therefore, the country would do well to learn from both its regional partners and elsewhere in the world, especially in developed democracies. The defense review

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<sup>107</sup> See *The South African Defense Review* in [http://www.mil.za/Articles&Papers/DefenceReview/chapter\\_one.htm](http://www.mil.za/Articles&Papers/DefenceReview/chapter_one.htm) (accessed on 02/29/2004)

requires resources and political will in order to be undertaken successfully. This is a major challenge to both government and other would-be stakeholders to commit themselves fully to the process. In net, a review is a periodical process, a breather, if you will, in the life of the military and defense. It has both mechanical and organic dimensions to it. In the final analysis a review is a democratic instrument of asserting a nation's oversight role over its military establishment, and is a recognition that the relative importance of factors in the national security matrix change over time.

### **C. A DEFENSE BUREAUCRACY**

The need for a defense bureaucracy is an imperative that the Defense Review would have to contend with. A defense bureaucracy provides an institutional template within which both the military and the democratically elected civilian leaders interact and thus can each be held accountable for their actions in defense management. In essence, therefore, such a bureaucracy is desirable for the overall goal of good governance and transparency. The establishment of a defense bureaucracy goes well with Weber's argument that, "The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any form of organization."<sup>108</sup>

For Botswana in particular, the dilemma of statecraft and democratic control is the lack of civilian expertise on the military and defense. Thus a defense bureaucracy, separate from the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration is desirable in that it would divorce the military, a peculiar organization by all means, from the police and the civil service, as is the case in the current setup. Defense concerns the security of a nation and inherently involves decisions about committing lives and other resources for the nation's defense and security. At best, the management of violence involves decisions of live and death. The military as the principal possessor of the monopoly of the means of violence naturally assumes a special and distinctive position in society. This therefore dictates that they have a distinct bureaucratic institution that would not only understand their vocation, but also seek to respond as best as possible to their special demands. Above all, such a bureaucracy should have the requisite expertise on the 'the baby' it is supposed to nurse and nurture.

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<sup>108</sup> H.H Gerth and C.Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1958), p.214.

As Bruneau and Goetze point out, the very existence of a Ministry of Defense (MoD) is an important basic indicator of the overall situation of civilian-military relations in a country.<sup>109</sup> For Botswana, the absence of a MoD goes to show the dilemmas that the current system has despite its relative stability in maintaining healthy civil-military relations. In the absence of a MoD in Botswana, the functions outlined here may seem simple yet they are not. In a nutshell, these functions provide an operational template within which a defense bureaucracy operates:

- First, a MOD would structure the power relations between democratically elected civilians and the armed forces. It essentially institutionalizes the relationship between the democratically elected representatives and those who hold the monopoly of force.
- Second, a MoD would sort out or define and allocate responsibilities between and among civilians and military officers. The emphasis here is less about civilian control than it is about the division of tasks and responsibilities. A key factor in the rational definition and allocation of responsibilities, is the role of a MoD as buffer between politics and the armed forces
- A third purpose in creating a MoD is to maximize the effectiveness of employment of the armed forces. Effectiveness in this case means the capacity to implement policies through the use of armed force.
- The fourth and last major purpose in creating a MoD is to maximize efficient use of resources (e.g., funds, personnel, and equipment) as roles and missions change. Efficiency in this instance means the ability to achieve a goal at the lowest possible cost.<sup>110</sup>

These core functions deserve analysis here in order to place them in context. In a situation where there is no defense bureaucracy, it is obvious that creating one would change the institutional relations and power dynamics of the state. Following from the functions outlined above, some of the new developments a defense bureaucracy would usher into Botswana's national security portrait include the following:

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<sup>109</sup> Thomas C. Bruneau and Richard B. Goetze, "Ministries of Defense and Democratic Oversight," (Unpublished Work), p.5.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*, p.14.

## **1. Redefining the Political Chain of Command**

A MoD is the core institution that stands at the center of the paradoxical civil-military question of “who guards the guardians.” The form, function and institutional relationships of a MoD go a long way in addressing some of the most pertinent issues in civil-military relations in modern democracies. As indicated earlier, the current arrangement in Botswana is such that this relationship is not clearly defined and lacks the desirable institutional machinations of bureaucratic organization.

It is currently ambiguous as to who is responsible for the management of the defense sector. Moreover, the current defense management system is sketchy and ad hoc, and thus fails to prevail over defense issues effectively and efficiently. The fact that defense is clustered with the police and the civil service is also problematic. The civilian-military staff interaction on operational and policy matters is conspicuously absent. Likewise, civilian expertise on the military is seriously lacking in the current framework. Creating a MoD would therefore bring the two competencies together and ensure that a civilian-military mix of expertise is brought under one house. With a defense bureaucracy and such competencies at his/her disposal, the minister would advise the president on military and defense matters more authoritatively.

## **2. New Relationships and a New Culture of Civil-Military Relations**

Equally important, a MOD would establish a line relationship with other ministries and address issues of defense at par. The minister would relate with the rest of his cabinet and parliamentary colleagues equally, and in so doing, engender a new culture of institutional relationships. Furthermore, institutional relationships would be established between the ministry, and other organizations within the state bureaucracy, as well as the private sector. Above all, a defense bureaucracy would create a new culture of civil-military relations, one that puts the chief of the armed forces in his rightful place as advisor, whereas the permanent secretary would be the accounting officer for the ministry. On budgeting and related expenditure processes, the accounting officer, would be able to relate with his/her colleagues in other ministries, and articulate demands and responses of the defense sector more ably than is the case currently. In the long run, a defense bureaucracy would also add value to the human and material resources needed in

both parliament and the National Security Council, especially in the relevant defense and security committees. This would also improve parliamentary expertise on defense. Similarly, a MoD would help broaden the interest of legislators and others in matters pertaining to the armed forces, national security and defense, beyond a typically small group in the executive branch.<sup>111</sup> As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the current institutional matrix of democratic control pegs these issues primarily in the executive, and thus denies other players and interested parties an opportunity not only to know, but also to participate in the process. To this end, a MoD would provide a window of opportunity to policy makers, civil society and individuals to access information on national defense.

### **3. Defining Roles and Missions**

In a democracy, democratically elected civilians determine national strategy and the functions of the armed forces.<sup>112</sup> Defining roles and missions is therefore one of the key functions of a MoD. As one observer pointed out, Government should develop a policy relative to which military affairs issues should fall within the public domain (including parliamentary accountability) and which should not.<sup>113</sup>

Roles and missions spell out the purposes for which the military exists. As an extension of executive control, a MoD would focus primarily on the formulation of military and defense policy. Thus far, a defense bureaucracy would allocate resources to various services of the military. Normatively, this would improve allocative and spending efficiency, not only in the management of the resources themselves, but also in ensuring that the services utilize the resources according to established performance bench-marks that relate to the overall roles and missions of the military. Within the defense sector, the allocation of resources for training, personnel, and equipments should reflect the roles and missions for the armed forces established during a process of national security

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<sup>111</sup> *ibid*, p.34.

<sup>112</sup> See “A National Security Strategy for a Global Age,”(Washington DC.: White House, December, 2000), pp.i-67.

<sup>113</sup> “How Can Botswana Improve Its Democracy?” A Discussion of the Symposium in Holm and Molutsi, *op cit*, p.295.

planning.<sup>114</sup> In seeking to meet the requirements for training and development, the budget should therefore seek to respond to the bigger objectives set by roles and missions set within the framework of a national security policy.

#### **4. Budget and Personnel Development**

The competence of the military-civilian bureaucracy is a major factor that bears directly on the management of defense expenditure. Merging competencies and asserting control through a defense bureaucracy is therefore an important attribute of accountable governance. For one, a MoD relocates the role of the chief of defense forces, removing him from being the accounting officer for the force and placing that role within the ambit of the secretary of defense. Equally important, decisions on personnel and training must be made within the MoD given their complexity and sensitivity. Under the present setup in Botswana, such decisions are largely made at BDF headquarters. A combination of military and civilian expertise is desirable for determining force structure, analyzing threats and vulnerabilities, and aligning combat capabilities with appropriate resources. As argued in Chapter II, defense is not “just another spending department.” The defense budget is complex and requires particular expertise. A defense bureaucracy would thus bridge the current institutional flaws in budgeting and accountability characteristic of the current relationship between the Ministries of Presidential Affairs and Finance and Development Planning. A defense bureaucracy would go a long way in improving defense budgeting capabilities, and ensuring that the taxpayer gets value for their money at least in terms of systems of management.

Defense equipment programs entail acquisition and maintenance of high cost items with complicated life spans. The programs involve forward commitments of resources that are spread over a long time. Thus the process requires a combination of specialized technical and management expertise in order to attain efficiency and effectiveness. A defense bureaucracy provides the right platform for the organization and development of such skills. Similarly, issues of conditions of service of the military would be understood and put in perspective under a defense bureaucracy. Over the years, it has been difficult to argue a case for the peculiarity of defense, a thing that perhaps has

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<sup>114</sup> Jeanne K. Giraldo, “Defense Budgets and Civilian Oversight,” Occasional Paper #9, Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 2001), p.5.

influenced a reactive rather proactive policy in addressing military conditions of service as argued earlier. A MoD as a political and administrative entity would help create a better understanding of defense overall, and help formulate appropriate budgetary and managerial measures to address them. More importantly, a defense bureaucracy would trim the military's over involvement in defense policy by counter-balancing it with more civilian expertise.

In addition, a MoD would also pay particular attention to issues of military benefits, both during and after service, as well as articulate an appropriate active and reserve force composition and posture. Currently, as more and more members of the first generation of the BDF retire, there are indications that they have not been adequately prepared for post-service life. Some retirees, particularly some of the first to leave service, have expressed concern over this issue, arguing that they fear that once they are out they are simply forgotten.<sup>115</sup> Although there have been indications in the military that there is a concern for this problem, issues of implementation capacity remain a major setback. Even then, the policy decision to design retirement programs and related management aspects of those programs, and to manage them, belong to a higher authority.

## **5. Issues of Women's Integration**

A defense bureaucracy would formulate policy to guide the gradual integration of women in the military. This area has been problematic for many countries even for developed democracies. The experiences of these other nations with issues such as fraternization should serve as insights to how Botswana could best handle similar problems.<sup>116</sup> Further, the integration of women would need a special regime to accommodate their peculiarities such as issues of families, spouses, etc. Closer home, South Africa, Malawi and other neighboring states would be instrumental in setting the stage for women integration in the BDF.

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<sup>115</sup> Major General P.J. Motang (Ret.) articulated this problem quite vividly during an interview with this author on January 16, 2004 in Goodhope, Botswana. Motang, is one of the founding fathers of the BDF, and retired as Deputy Commander, in 1992.

<sup>116</sup> For a detailed account of women integration in the military and its potential problems for Botswana, see Mpho C. Mophuting, "Expanding the Shield and Facing the Challenges: Integration of Women in the Botswana Defense Force." Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California: March 2003.

## **6. A Vehicle for Regional and International Security Building**

On the international scene, a MoD would have to interact with various actors involved in international defense and security. Within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) framework, a defense bureaucracy would help solidify the country's regional military relations. This would improve bilateral and multilateral ties between the ministry and its equals in the region. The SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security is one such framework for this kind of interaction. Similarly, Botswana's defense roles would be put in better perspective in the African Union, the United Nations and other international bodies when articulated by the MoD in concert with the Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation ministry. In the process, defense and foreign policy would be better synchronized. This relationship would also avoid some of the pitfalls experienced in past peacekeeping missions.

## **7. Research and Development**

One of the major handicaps of the current matrix of democratic control is the absence of research and discourse of the military and defense. With a research unit, a defense bureaucracy would also help promote a culture of research, documentation and debate about the military's development. With a lifetime of close to thirty years, the BDF has a rich history that must be recorded for future generations. The first generation of soldiers retires and goes home unnoticed, yet they have a lot to tell about their experiences in service. These 'mobile archives' have engraved in them a wealth of knowledge that if untapped with would be a major loss to the nation's history and defense. Developments in science and technology also require continuous enquiry, especially given that the military is a major consumer of these commodities. Research is therefore desirable.

## **D. REFORMING THE DEFENSE COUNCIL**

The Defense Council does not fulfill the role of a defense bureaucracy at all. In its current posture, the council does not give the taxpayer value for their money because of its narrow focus. Within the new institutional framework, the role of the Defense Council would essentially be taken over by a MoD. With the creation of defense bureaucracy, it would be in the national interest to give the council a new form and mandate. To derive better utility out of the arrangement, creating a National Security Council (NSC) out of

the Defense Council would be prudent. This would give it a more active role in issues of national security. In so doing this would broaden the scope of its business. The NSC would comprise representation from key stakeholders in the national security sector such as the MoD, the police, intelligence community, Wildlife and National Parks, National Disaster Preparedness Committee, National Aids Council and others. Among others, it would look at the following:

- The formulation of a national security policy so as to harmonize national security interests with foreign policy, trade and commerce.
- Advise the president/executive on broader issues of national security.
- Synchronize the efforts and energies of various national security actors in the achievement of the broader national security objectives.
- Synchronizing defense policy and national security strategy.

The need to reconcile national security interests between the military, police, department of wildlife and national parks and the intelligence branch of the state is a necessary condition for statecraft. It becomes necessarily so when these sectors compete for similar resources and often play overlapping roles. Currently, the major threat facing the state is growing crime. The police are unable to cope with the high crime rate because of institutional inadequacies. Their budget has continuously remained lower than that of the military despite changes in the security equation. The net result is that the peace dividend is eroded in the process. This obviously discourages investment.

With an infection rate of 38.5 percent, amongst the highest in the world, the HIV/Aids scourge currently presents the greatest national security threat to Botswana. More recently, illegal immigrants have also added a twist to the country's national security dilemma. Efforts in fighting the HIV/Aids scourge, combating rising crime, dealing with immigration issues and the proliferation of small arms, and any future developments in this area, must necessarily be synchronized within a high political structure such as the NSC. Similarly, as the fluid nature of international terrorism rears its head in various manifestations, it is pertinent for the country to consider critical infrastructure protection more seriously. It would be a fallacy to think that Botswana is not vulnerable. The vulnerability of the diamond mining industry, undoubtedly a key national asset, should also be considered under the NSC.

## **E. CREATING A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON DEFENSE**

The parliamentary committee on trade, foreign affairs and security is not adequate in its form to address defense issues. Its agenda is too broad and covers a wide area of important issues of national interest. It lacks expertise on defense. It is therefore doubtful that it can devote enough attention to defense. A better approach would be to create a separate Defense Committee. The Defense Committee would thus devote thorough attention to issues of the defense budget, acquisition programs and would also evaluate the lead-time between procurement and final use of the products. These are very complex and cannot only be left to the military and the suppliers. Between the approval of the budget and the actual processes of acquisition, there is need to strengthen the oversight role of parliament.

Over time, with combined technical and administrative expertise from the MoD, the committee would be better placed to monitor the use of public monies and assert its parliamentary oversight role more competently. To this end, the potential for abuse of office and corruption in acquisition processes would be minimized. Once a MOD has been created, the committee would benefit considerably from the expert support of the ministry's staff, and help improve oversight capacity and efficiency. A Defense committee is likely to enhance knowledge about the requirements of the defense sector more ably than would a broad-based committee as the current arrangement provides. Defense committees also serve to balance the right of the public in a democracy to be informed and the need for secrecy that governs some activities and policies in the realm of national security affairs.<sup>117</sup>

In the search for a new institutional framework of democratic control, it would also be prudent to create a structure within parliament to look at officer promotions. The location of officer promotions in the executive undermines the principle of separation of powers. In addition, it undercuts the legislature's oversight role on the development of the military.

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<sup>117</sup> Jeanne K. Giraldo, *op cit*, p.10.

## V. CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to metaphorically “unpack the boxes” by assessing institutions of democratic civilian control of the military in Botswana. First and foremost, the thesis has attempted to apply an institutionalist approach to the problems of civilian control in Botswana. It has sought to demonstrate the inherent weaknesses in the current institutional framework of civilian control of the military and how such a framework may lead to setbacks in healthy civil military relations and democratic governance. In particular, it underlined the problems of centralized power in the Office of the Presidency, and identified potential problems to democracy such power dynamics may pose. Further, this work delved into the institutional inadequacies of the sketchy and ad hoc defense bureaucracy that the country has. In this regard, the problems of professionalization without developing a strong defense bureaucracy were highlighted. Also underscored were the dilemmas of the Defense Council, challenging its relevance to Botswana’s current topography of national security. It was also argued that the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration (MPAPA) is not an adequate bureaucracy for defense because it has a lot in its hands to contend with. Consequently, its efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with defense is questionable.

By extension, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) derives little benefit from the current bureaucracy because of its weaknesses and may not necessarily be giving the taxpayer the best benefit for defense, especially given the high spending on the military. Similarly, this thesis highlighted oversight shortfalls of the legislature, particularly focusing on the parliamentary committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade and Security. In addition, it delved into the issue of elite-class interactions and how they have influenced the evolution of the post-colonial state and civil-military relations over the years. To this extent, the preoccupation with professionalization as a tool for military development is necessary but not sufficient. What the country needs more than ever before are robust institutions that would be supported by accountable, responsible and responsive leadership. Institutions have a demonstrative capacity and are able to transcend personalities. Institutions help create regulative norms in society. They help socialize individuals and groups into certain patterns of behavior.

In the final analysis, this thesis has argued a case for a new institutional matrix of democratic control. The need to clearly and objectively define the role of the armed forces, and other sectors of national security is a pressing one. The best instrument for such an exercise of statecraft is a strategic defense review. Government is contemplating a strategic defense review for Botswana. This is a long awaited measure that will help shape the national security paradox of the country. It is an exercise that will need political will and commitment on the part of all the stakeholders. Hopefully, the review will identify, among others, the pressing need for a defense bureaucracy. By outlining the potential benefits of a defense bureaucracy, one sees how it will impact the civil-military interactions domestically and internationally. Further recommendations include the reconfiguration of the Defense Council into a National Security Council to broaden its mandate. Such a development would add value to the country's institutional capacity in national security decision-making. In like manner is proposed the creation of a parliamentary committee on defense, separate from the current arrangement where the committee has a lot of equally sensitive issues of national security to handle. However, it is noted that the institutional reconfiguration should be done within the context of capabilities. It must be understood that defense reform and the creation of a defense bureaucracy is a long-term project in its own right and cannot be achieved overnight. It has to be done piecemeal to allow the country to develop the requisite skills to match the management needs of the country and its historical stage. Overall, the new institutional matrix would enhance civilian expertise on defense and thus guard against military encroachment in the policy realm.

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